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The Times Literary Supplement

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Cover picture
A South African farm worker's family. On this particular farm, workers earn 180 Rand, or about £36, a year. The photograph is taken from *Working Women in South Africa* by Lesley Lawson (144pp. Photo. £5.95, 0 7453 0206 8).

An artist constructs a science

P. N. Johnson-Laird

JAMES V. WERTSCH
Vygotsky and the Social Formation of Mind
262pp. Harvard University Press. £20.50.
0674 94350 3

Russian psychology began before the era of Marxism-Leninism but with a materialism entirely compatible with it. Its founding father, Ivan Sechenov, argued that behaviour was moulded by environment and that mental phenomena could be reduced to physiology. This prescience was a characteristic instance of bad timing from which, and for which, Russian psychologists have nearly always suffered. The doctrine would have gone down splendidly after the Revolution, still better in the 1940s, but unfortunately Sechenov published in Tsarist Russia. His book was considered subversive, and his career never fully recovered.

His chief successor, Ivan Pavlov, was interested in only one thing: the digestive tract, apparently as a result of reading G. H. Lewes's popular book, *The Physiology of Common Life*, at an impressionable age. And he knew just one big thing: the systematic methods of German experimental physiology. The world thinks of him as the discoverer of the conditioned reflex. He tormented dogs, said Bernard Shaw, to show that their mouths water at the sound of the dinner gong. (He added that the best prophylactic for such despicable behaviour would have been singing lessons, preferably from Shaw's mother.) In fact, Pavlov did not discover the conditioned reflex, which had been known for at least a century, but rather some of its underlying principles and ramifications. He observed, for instance, a curious incident with dogs that did not salivate. They had been shown the food repeatedly, but not allowed to eat it. When someone slammed a door, however, their mouths spontaneously started to water again.

Not even Pavlov was exempt from bad timing; he did not have a secure job until past the age of forty. His rival, Vladimir Bechterev, anticipated Pavlov's conversion to a physiological account of conditioning, and achieved more rapid promotion. He knew many things—psychiatry, brain surgery, experimental psychology—and played fox to Pavlov's hedgehog. But the hedgehog finally outwitted the fox. In a public challenge, Pavlov conditioned two dogs said by Bechterev to be unconditional.

The crude materialism of early Russian psychology, much as it was to please Lenin and Stalin, owed nothing to Marx. Indeed, there has only ever been one major attempt to formulate a Marxist psychology. It happened just after the Revolution, when the younger generation of psychologists was inspired to reconstruct the subject on Marxist principles, though admitting a few alien ideas such as the Unconscious. The leading figure in this movement was Vygotsky, the protagonist of James Wertsch's book. The psychologists' enthusiasm, like that of many others, was premature. When Stalin's purges began, their work was condemned as perverse. They recanted in public or disappeared, or both. Western science and "cosmopolitan" (ie, Jewish) influences on psychology were denounced by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Pavlov became a Hero of the Revolution and a kind of posthumous Lysenko; Vygotsky, the real hero of Soviet psychology, was expunged from the textbooks. After Stalin died, the extremist versions of Pavlovian reflexology were in turn denounced as "vulgar materialism", and, at last, psychologists could pursue their ideas wherever they led—into information theory, generative linguistics, and computer modelling—always provided they asserted that these ideas were compatible with dialectical materialism.

James Wertsch is an American linguist; who has made several trips to the Soviet Union, and taught at Moscow State University. He has studied Vygotsky's works, many of which have yet to be translated into English, and he has talked to Vygotsky's daughter, to his students, and to their intellectual heirs. He has also carried out studies of children's psychological development in the Vygotskian tradition. His book falls into three parts: a biographical sketch of Vygotsky; an outline of his principal tenets, and Wertsch's own attempt to bring them up to date. His scholarship is exemplary: the book is the most detailed account in English of its subject's life and work. It will be welcomed by cognitive psychologists and students of development.

Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (he later changed his name to Vygotzky) was born in 1896 near Minsk, one of eight children in an intellectual Jewish family. His father was a bank administrator; his mother was trained as a teacher. During childhood, he learned to love literature and the arts. He also liked to debate in public and to recite poetry, with the curious habit of deliberately skipping certain lines on the grounds that abbreviation had a heightened significance. Despite his brilliance at school, his path to Moscow University was not straightforward. The Tsarist minister of

education had decreed that the 3 per cent quota of Jews was to be chosen by lottery from the ablest students. Vygotsky was lucky. He graduated with a degree in law in 1917, but he had also studied psychology, philosophy and literature. He returned to his home town and taught there throughout the revolutionary years. He read widely, and, according to Wertsch, the authors prominent in his reading ranged from poets such as Blok, Mandelstam and Pushkin, to psychologists such as James, Freud and Pavlov—all it would seem in preparation for the single most important event in his life: his address to the Second All-Russian Psychoneurological Congress in 1924.

Vygotsky spoke on the relation between conditioned reflexes and consciousness, and this theme prefigures the rest of his intellectual career. Psychology is in essence a series of reactions to Descartes's dualism. One reaction is to deny the relevance of the mind and to seek refuge in reflexes, behaviour and physiology. Another is to abandon materialism and to seek refuge in introspection, subjective phenomena and idealism. Vygotsky saw that neither approach was correct. But for him, as Wertsch points out, the problem was that neither could accommodate the Marxian assumption that in order to understand the individual, one must first understand the social relations in which the individual exists, since social life determines consciousness.

One of Vygotsky's future students, A. R. Luria, who was himself to become a major neuropsychologist, attended the 1924 congress. He wrote later that Vygotsky delivered his paper without notes, and in a manner which, together with its content, electrified the audience. Immediately afterwards, this unknown teacher from a small provincial town was invited to join the Moscow Psychological Institute. As a historical footnote, when Luria himself addressed the International Psychological Congress held in London in 1968, he too electrified his audience by speaking brilliantly in English and without notes, having, in a typical gesture, torn them up in dissatisfaction just as he was about to speak.

Soon after his arrival in Moscow, Vygotsky completed a thesis on the psychology of art based in part on his earlier analysis of Hamlet

and imbued with the ideas of Russian Formalism. He also became seriously ill with tuberculosis. Thereafter his life was largely a race between his work and his illness. This pressure, and his vision of re-structuring psychology, seem, Wertsch says, to have created an almost messianic impact on all who encountered him. His genius was no doubt fuelled by the intellectual excitement of the post-revolutionary years. There were many practical problems for psychology to solve—massive illiteracy, vast cultural differences among the Soviet peoples, and a lack of remedial education for the mentally and physically impaired. Vygotsky set up laboratories and clinics, he trained teachers, he supervised students, he carried out research, he wrote and translated, he toured the country to lecture on psychology, he even entered medical school to study neurology.

Marx had stressed the primacy of action, and this idea lies behind Vygotsky's theory of the development of consciousness. It depends on social forces, which operate, as Wertsch puts it, "independently of individual human plans or volition". Vygotsky's guiding principle is accordingly that children first learn to interact with others socially, and then develop higher mental processes as a result of "internalizing" these actions. Coincidentally, the importance of action, though not deriving from Marx, inspired that other influential student of the genesis of intelligence, Jean Piaget. He argued that there is a unitary set of principles underlying all development, and that children develop autonomously; education must attend their development. They first act on the world physically, and their intelligence is then formed from "internalizing" these actions.

The conflict between Piagetian and Vygotskian theories reached its climax over the case of children's "egocentric speech". Young children often talk to themselves as they are trying to carry out some task. A two-year-old in one of Wertsch's own studies, for example, uttered the following commentary on an attempt to fit together a puzzle containing animal figures: "Hm... Oh wh-oh, me got duck. Snake. Snake. Break. Puppy. Ta goo do. This snake, snake. ...". For Piaget, such speech is merely the child thinking aloud; it has no communicative function, and disappears as the child begins to enter fully into human society. For Vygotsky, however, it is a form found in the transition from ordinary communicative speech to genuinely inner speech, which is an internal and abbreviated form of language that is used to plan and regulate actions. He made three observations that seemed to bear out his contention. First, children talk more often in this way when a problem gets more difficult. Second, they talk less often in this way when there is no obvious audience. Third, their egocentric speech becomes more incoherent as they grow older.

Unlike Piagetian theory, Vygotsky's ideas have implications for pedagogical technique. He noted that different children can have the same accomplishments, yet differ in their ability to benefit from adult instruction. He referred to this distance from current to potential achievement under adult guidance as "the zone of proximal development". Instruction should ideally occur within this zone. The hypothesis is borne out by some recent research, though it is reminiscent of the old idea that children should be taught just slightly in advance of their ability.

Vygotsky devised a simple task which revealed some interesting differences between adults' and children's concepts. Wooden blocks differing in shape, colour, size and



Antonio Mendoza's untitled gelatin silver print can be seen in the exhibition *The Animal in Photography 1843-1985* (catalogue available from the Photographers' Gallery, 30pp. £4.75, 0 907879 09 8) at the Photographers' Gallery, 5 and 6 Great Newport Street, London WC2, until September 6.

Plekhanov's theory of perception in which symbols represent objects by virtue of their similarity in structure, and that he would have objected to Lenin's simplistic dogma that perception yields direct copies of objects. In fact, Vygotsky almost always worked on higher forms of thought, such as abstract reasoning. He believed that it depends on a deliberate and conscious manipulation of contextually independent signs, and that the transition to such a higher process of thought occurs as a result of social forces. Key parts in the transition are played by school, by instruction from adults, and by learning to read: culture is the determining factor in the intellectualization of the mind.

Vygotsky and Luria together studied the reasoning ability of a non-literate people in Uzbekistan, a remote region of Soviet Central Asia. They discovered that these people did indeed have difficulty in grasping abstract relations. If they were given pictures of, say, a hammer, a saw, a log and a hatchet, and asked to say which three went together, then they did not select the three tools. They were influenced by their experience of the practical context of using hatchets and saws on logs. After only a year or two of schooling, however, people from the same culture could readily form the appropriate grouping. Vygotsky tended to treat literacy as a homogeneous phenomenon: you could not think about things out of context until you had learned to read. Modern investigators have qualified this view. Mere literacy, such as the singular ability to read a sacred text, does not enhance intellectual competence.

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Vygotsky devised a simple task which revealed some interesting differences between adults' and children's concepts. Wooden blocks differing in shape, colour, size and

The long-term endgame

J. E. Spence

HERIBERT ADAM and KOGILA MOODLEY
South Africa without Apartheid: Dismantling racial domination
315pp. University of California Press. £15.25.
0520057694

ROBIN COHEN
Endgame in South Africa?
108pp. James Currey, 54b Thornhill Square, Islington, London N1 1BE. £4.95.
0852553080

KENNETH W. GRUNDY
The Militarization of South African Politics
133pp. Tauris. £14.95.
1850430195

ALLAN BOESAK and CHARLES VILLALBA
VICENCIO (Editors)
A Call for an End to Unjust Rule

189pp. Edinburgh: St Andrew Press. £5.25.
0715205943

DENNIS DAVID and MANA SLABBERT (Editors)
Crime and Power in South Africa: Critical studies in criminology
138pp. Global Book Resources. £5.50.
0864660331

ROGER OMOND
The Apartheid Handbook
Second edition
282pp. Penguin. Paperback, £3.95.
0140227490

GRAHAM LEACH
South Africa: No easy path to peace
266pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £14.95.
0710208480

"South Africa after apartheid" is now a familiar theme of international academic conferences; and a more apocalyptic version has been a central preoccupation in novels by Nadine Gordimer, J. M. Coetzee and others. Social scientists – on the evidence of at least two of the books under review – have now caught up with their literary counterparts: both Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley in *South Africa without Apartheid: Dismantling racial domination* and Robin Cohen in *Endgame in South Africa?* provide the reader with a blend of analysis and prediction about what the future might bring. Each acknowledges that the traumatic events of the past two years represent a turning-point in relations between black and white. "Gone," remark Adam and Moodley, "are the confident dogmatism and ideological solidarity of the Verwoerdian era," while Cohen argues that "for the first time since the accession to power by the Nationalist Party in 1948, the political initiative has been wrested from the hands of the government and passed to those who oppose the system."

Both agree, too, that the current unrest is qualitatively different from the events of Sharpeville in 1960 and Soweto in 1976: black militancy is more widespread, embracing rural as well as urban areas; "the 1980s revolt," according to Adam and Moodley, "has a more political and revolutionary thrust"; the banned African National Congress has gained legitimacy and credibility both at home and abroad as a major political force; finally, a powerful trade union movement now exists, as a result of which "coercive military power cannot secure individual productivity or prevent consumer and industrial action."

Cohen, however, takes issue with Adam's earlier work, and describes him as a "top-down theorist". In his widely quoted *Modernising Racial Domination* (written in 1971, when the South African State appeared invulnerable to internal and external pressure), Adam had placed his faith in the technocratic, progressive elite of Afrikaners who emerged in the 1960s in business, the professions and the higher reaches of the civil service. This group, he argued, was "an increasingly unshakable oligarchy" capable of internal liberalization through a process of gradual de-racialization and economic concessions, which "falsely the assumption that mounting internal tension will make a violent revolutionary change inevitable." In *South Africa without Apartheid*, however, it is readily conceded that "there is a new quality to the opposition that technocratic policy could not anticipate" and that "the technocratic vision of racial reform is bound for ultimate failure if it continues to underestimate the need for acceptable political incorporation – in other words, for the genuine

abolition of apartheid."

The obstacles in the way of this objective remain formidable: neither Cohen nor Adam and Moodley foresee the "endgame" in terms of a "single cataclysmic event". Rather, Cohen sees South Africa as "in the beginnings of a new long-term unstable equilibrium, such as that obtaining in Northern Ireland or Lebanon", which is likely to be characterized by "unfocused (and more directed) violence, urban disorder, mass struggle, state brutality and economic crisis". For Adam and Moodley, "the formidable legacy of mobilized [Afrikaner] ethnicity still blocks any individualistic, nonracial form of government, and is likely to continue to sabotage liberal, universalistic political incorporation for a long time to come."

Neither volume makes any detailed reference to the significance of outside pressures as a catalyst of change, though Cohen cites the campaign for divestment in Europe and the United States as evidence that South Africa cannot expect a return to the earlier status quo. Adam and Moodley do, however, have pertinent things to say about the role of the business community in South Africa, which are especially topical given the widespread belief that economic sanctions – whether selective or comprehensive – will galvanize South Africa's industrial and commercial elite into irresistible pressure on the State to change course before the economy collapses beyond hope of repair.

They carefully distinguish between the conflicting interests and aspirations of those involved in agriculture, mining and manufacturing, and suggest three options that might be taken if "business can act concertedly and with clout". They rule out the possibility of support for State repression on the grounds that it would "increase Black alienation and international isolation . . . [and because] mass rage has the capacity to wreak havoc in an advanced industrial economy". The second option is an alliance of the business community with the black nationalist opposition, promoting the "exchange of Afrikaner political power with African political hegemony" – an interesting hypothesis in view of the recent pilgrimage of prominent industrialists to Lusaka in search of enlightenment on ANC economic policy. The difficulty with this option is that "business . . . provides neither direction nor prescription for how a stubborn Afrikaner hegemony can be dislodged peacefully . . . Capitalist cost-benefit calculations fail with power centres such as the bureaucracy and the security forces." Finally, they allude to the possibility of an alliance between capitalism and the unions on the grounds that the latter are currently "ambivalent partners of reform rather than revolution."

Nevertheless, Adam and Moodley are cautious, rightly, in their assessment of the business community's ability to play a creative political role, for its members have not "developed a political style and corporate culture conducive to concerted planning or lobbying". Indeed, their record in the past has been ambivalent, to say the least, embracing a pact with government in the early 1980s based on a faith in the virtues of technocratic reform, and support for the tricameral constitution which pointedly excluded black participation in central government.

That the business elite have had an influence on government policy cannot, of course, be denied: the relaxation of influx control, the lifting of restrictions on trade union activity, the decision to grant leasehold and property rights to selected categories of urban blacks are all examples of reforms, in part instigated by business pressure (and, to be fair, by external concern as well). But whether the South African State will respond on an issue as fundamental as the incorporation of the black majority into the central organs of power is – in terms of the Adam and Moodley analysis – seriously open to question.

A brief review can only do scant justice to the merits of these two books. Both provide a detailed explanation of the mechanisms which sustain apartheid; Cohen, in particular, draws fruitfully on the work by human geographers on the relationship between spatial patterns and social relations. His sophisticated analysis of the role of ideology is offset by wit and insight, and both he and Adam and Moodley are especially illuminating on techniques of

social control effected through a repressive State apparatus and the strategy of co-opting potential allies in the black community. Adam and Moodley's discussion of the ethnic factor in South African politics also deserves commendation, and all three writers – perhaps surprisingly – display a cautious optimism about the eventual outcome. For Adam and Moodley, "it largely depends on white policy choices whether 'things have got to get worse before they get better'".

Technocratic pragmatism is not confined solely to the civic structure of the State and the private sector of the economy. It can be found, too, in the upper echelons of the South African Defence Force and is in large part the product of P. W. Botha's managerial revolution in the armed services during his tenure as Minister of Defence (1966–78). This thesis is well developed in Kenneth W. Grundy's book *The Militarization of South African Politics*, an expanded and updated version of a Bradlow paper commissioned in 1983 by the South African Institute of International Affairs. In its original formulation, Grundy's paper on the rise of the South African security establishment provoked the government into a hastily convened press conference to deny the substance of the author's conclusions. As he remarks, "we had touched a raw nerve".

Grundy correctly focuses on the crucial role of the State Security Council, in which senior ministers and military personnel, under the chairmanship of the State President, test the relevance and efficacy of policy – whether social, economic, strategic or foreign – against the requirements of national security. The commitment to a "total strategy" to cope with the perceived threat of a "total onslaught" by the forces of revolutionary communism has been translated into day-to-day policy by the SSC, in which the senior military have an important – though not always decisive – influence.

Grundy warns against assuming a military conspiracy at work in the citadels of South African power. There is division within the armed services: between those who have imbibed the orthodoxies of counter-insurgency theory ("winning hearts and minds") and define their role as providing a stable and secure context in which social and economic reform can take root, and those who regard themselves simply as the guardians of law and order and who are not inclined to philosophize about the long-term political significance of what they do. Grundy also stresses the strength of white civic culture as a bulwark against conventional coup-making by the military, pointing to the tension between the Afrikaner's rejection of the idea of a professional army and his traditional preference for a people's army based on the Kommando principle. (In this context, Cohen argues that the "insensitivity of the police and the armed forces to the national and international implications of their actions" is consistent with the "historic acceptance of initiatives by local officers" – the basis, in fact, of the Kommando system.) Grundy's analysis of the militarization of South African society, and in particular of the impact of militarization on the electoral system, the media and the economic structures of the State, is especially original, and the book as a whole deserves a wide readership.

Nevertheless, there is more to South Africa than a rationalizing technocracy increasingly uncertain about its mission in a society which, Adam and Moodley argue, suffers from "moral bankruptcy and ideological exhaustion". One obvious aspect has been the refusal of many blacks to accept their fate as technocratic pawns in some grand design imposed upon them, and an important source of their resistance to State manipulation is the solace, comfort and, indeed, strength offered by religious belief. The Churches are often neglected in the academic literature on South Africa, but here at last is a volume of essays, edited by Allan Boesak and Charles Villa-Vieja, *A Call for an End to Unjust Rule*, which provides a moving, and encouraging, account of Christian commitment to the achievement of justice and racial equality. The work deals with the controversy which followed the publication in 1985 of the *Theological Rationale and a Call to Prayer for the End to Unjust Rule* by the executive of the South African Council of Churches. The debate about the status of the document

was intense. The Council came under attack from the media, and several prominent churchmen dissociated themselves. Yet, as Villa-Vieja points out, "It was never the intention of those involved in publishing the *Theological Rationale* to have the churches adopt before its distribution. It was intended to challenge to the churches rather than a document of the churches." *A Call for an End to Unjust Rule* provides an excellent introduction to the moral challenges facing the Churches in South Africa. When and in what way may Christians refuse his obligations to the State? Boesak, for example, dissects this proposition with a wealth of theological learning as he takes the reader through the ambiguities of Romans 13: 1–7 ("Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers . . ."). This is altogether a heartening book, written by scholars who demonstrate their Christian commitment and involvement in South African politics with impressive dedication.

Scholarly concern with the day-to-day life of the poor and the depressed in South Africa also manifest in *Crime and Power in South Africa*, a volume covering such diverse topics as gangs and family structure in Cape Town, the impact of legislation on the liquor trade and the legal control of migrant labour. The contributors are lawyers and sociologists with past or present connections with the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town. Their combined talents reveal a profound concern with social deprivation and its manifestation in the legal and political orders, reminding the reader of the fact and often unacknowledged, contribution of South Africa's English-speaking intellectuals to our understanding of South African society and of their attempts to remedy its ills.

Roger Omond's *The Apartheid Handbook* now in its second edition, contains a wealth of factual information about South Africa's social policies in operation. It is usefully arranged in categories for easy reference by those whose business it is to write and think about South Africa, as well as by those who wish to probe behind the inevitably selective and hurried presentation of South Africa in the world's media. Graham Leach, by contrast, has drawn on his extensive experience as the BBC's Southern Africa radio correspondent to produce, in *South Africa: No easy path to peace*, an account of the country's politics intended for those who have neither time nor inclination to tackle the vast scholarly literature on the subject. The overseas investor anxious about the future of his assets, and the enquiring visitor, will both benefit from this graphic and personal account. Leach is especially good on the population crisis facing South Africa over the long term, a topic surprisingly neglected by both Cohen and Adam and Moodley. He writes, "a political revolution in the country may or may not be open – only a fool would predict. But the revolution which will take place concerns the needs of people who will be living in the country come the twenty-first century." Quoting a report by the Department of Health and Welfare (which allegedly "stunned" P. W. Botha), he reminds us that in the year 2020 the black-white ratio will be 7 to 1; in 2020 it will be 1 to 1, and in 2040, 17 to 1. This clearly has profound implications for strategies of social control and technocratic manipulation. If white South Africa finally abandons the option of negotiation in favour of buying time, as did Smith in Rhodesia in 1965, it will soon find the precious little time will, in fact, be available.

Cry Justice: Prayers, meditations and readings from South Africa has been compiled by W. de Gruchy (126pp. Collins. Paperback, £2.95, 0 00 599886 7). After a twenty-four-page introduction, Professor de Gruchy makes passages on a succession of themes to form a devotional anthology appropriate to the current situation in Southern Africa, for use either by individuals or in community. Taken from the Bible, poems, hymns and songs (all tunes printed) including "Nkosi Sikelelwe" and selections from the writings of Walter Dube, Allan Boesak, Alan Paton, Desmond Tutu, Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali, Rube Rive and many others are combined with letters from prison and parts of theological studies. There are seven full-page illustrations by Patrick Holo, and Desmond Tutu has written the foreword.

Riot and restoration

Christopher Abel

HERBERT BRAUN

The Assassination of Gaitán: Public life and urban violence in Colombia
282pp. University of Wisconsin Press. £39.
0299 103609

JAMES WILLIAM PARK
Rafael Núñez and the Politics of Colombian Regionalism, 1863–1886
304pp. Louisiana State University Press.
£25.75.
08071 12356

Political violence is no stranger to the inner city of Bogotá. The Palace of Justice building, devastated in a confrontation between military and guerrillas last year, stood on the site of the most spectacular urban riot in recent Latin American experience. The *bogotazo* of April 9, 1948, precipitated by the assassination of the popular Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitán, laid waste much of the city centre. Journalists from the world press, covering the Ninth PanAmerican Conference attended by General George Marshall, compared the scene to the London Blitz. Elected Latin American leaders, like the Conservative president of Colombia Mariano Ospina Pérez, took advantage of the 9 de abril to press upon visiting United States delegates the urgency of a Marshall Aid programme for Latin America. Observing the international transition from the Second World War to the Cold War, Ospina and his allies magnified Communist participation in the riot, for American consumption.

Yet Marshall Aid was not forthcoming, and the idea was shelved until recently, when Henry Kissinger revived it. The Ospina government survived the challenge by recruiting conciliatory Liberals who demobilized a predominantly *gaitanista* urban populace. The

Communist party remained a secondary actor in national politics, subject to intermittent harassment and, from 1949, victim to fratricidal debate over the relative merits of evolutionary and revolutionary paths to socialism. Meanwhile, political violence, both urban and rural, continued: and both the Conservative and Liberal parties were divided between war factions extolling the cleansing powers of violence and peace factions proclaiming the desirability of national reconciliation and the imperative of security in the coffee export sector.

Himself the son of a hardware store manager in downtown Bogotá, Herbert Braun sets out to recapture the circumstances and character of the *bogotazo* in *The Assassination of Gaitán: Public life and urban violence in Colombia*. Braun's analysis of the urban crowd – a subject neglected by historians of non-European societies – is particularly fruitful. He complements conventional sources – press, diplomatic and the official investigation into the assassination – by interviews with business men, government and *gaitanista* leaders, policemen, priests, soldiers, Red Cross volunteers, an amateur film-maker and a professional photographer, though no informant who would admit to having rioted came forward when the interviews were conducted in 1979–80. The rioters wreaked their vengeance not on the symbols of international and national capitalism, not even on the Jockey and Gun Clubs, but on well-established targets like drink and clothing stores. When the rumour spread that Francoist clergy were shooting rioters from church-towers, churches and clerical educational establishments were also attacked, so that the largest single claim for damages after the riot came from the Congregación de Hermanos de las Escuelas Cristianas. Braun's study will be of interest to students of comparative urban politics as well as of Latin American history. His conclusion that "If ever there was a crowd that would substantiate the idea of the disorganized

and normless character of violence, riots and collective behaviour, the crowd of the *nueva de abril* would be the one" is carefully substantiated in a persuasive and well-written book.

The book is fascinating also where Braun sets out to recapture the character of the small city of the 1930s and 40s. Bogotá, a city now of about 5 million people, had a population of 235,000 in 1928, rising to 628,000 in 1951. Like other radical Liberal ideologues in Latin America before him (José Martí, in Cuba, most significantly) Gaitán embodied the aspirations of small property-owners. His objective of a modestly prosperous and equitable society, without extremes of wealth, in which small property-owners would enjoy access to capital, seemed realistic in the 1940s. So too did his aims of further democratization and enlarged participation in a polity whose democratic institutions and rituals were well established, but were also the instruments of a self-selecting, if not rigid, élite. Gaitán rejected notions of class struggle, seeking instead the restoration of bonds of reciprocity and co-operation between workers and capitalists, who, as the market economy had expanded, had turned their backs on the workers.

The assassination of Gaitán restored the dominant mode of gentlemanly bargaining between and within Conservative and Liberal élites in Colombia. Despite the interruptions of the last of the civil wars (that of the *mitidas* between 1899 and 1902) and a relatively benign military régime between 1953 and 1957, a system of *convivencia* has prevailed in Colombian politics, and was reaffirmed earlier this year by the presidential elections in May. James William Park's *Rafael Núñez and the Politics of Colombian Regionalism, 1863–1886* is well timed, since it coincides with the centenary of the 1886 Constitution, which, several times amended, has underpinned the most durable, if imperfect and often tenuous, liberal democracy in Latin America. The problem of national organization and consolidation in the aftermath of independence was long neg-

lected, especially by Africanists over-sanguine in their predictions about the consequences of decolonization. But now a substantial historiography, to which such scholars as David Bushnell, Tulio Halperin Donghi, Charles Halc and John Lynch have contributed, addresses the problem of creating a viable nation-state in large underpopulated countries, held together by inefficient networks of mule-trains, a formal commitment to Roman Catholicism and the need to pursue an effective international diplomacy.

The political career of Núñez embraces the main solutions to these problems. As a delegate at the Rionegro Convention, he took a part in formulating the federalist constitution of 1863, which decentralized power to the point of crippling central government, devolving sovereignty even in foreign policy and defence to the state governments, and abolishing capital punishment while declaring inviolate the individual's right to trade in weapons and possess them in peacetime. The adverse consequences of doctrinaire federalism caused Núñez, elected to the presidency in 1880, to revise his views; and the 1886 constitution embodied his recognition of the urgency of reconciling a degree of regional and local authority with a central government capable of pursuing an effective inter-regional transport policy and with the power to create a central note-issuing bank, so regulating interest rates. Núñez himself is an excellent subject. Intropective, sceptical, well travelled and well read, a prolific author and journalist, like numerous Latin American political leaders of the nineteenth century he bore only the most superficial resemblance to European stereotypes of the man on horseback.

Park's book raises essential issues and contains new material, but has been published prematurely in order to meet the centenary deadline. His strengths do not compensate for its principal weaknesses: a narrative which flags too frequently, and the author's failure to use a wide range of regional sources.

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Resisting the Renaissance

Patrick Collinson

JOHN MORGAN
Godly Learning: Puritan attitudes towards reason, learning, and education, 1540-1640
 360pp. Cambridge University Press. £35.
 0521235111
 A. L. ROWSE
Reflections on the Puritan Revolution
 262pp. Methuen. £14.95.
 0413408804

At Putney, in 1647, the question was put: "What is the reason that we find the light and glory of God eclipsed from our eyes this day?" Answer: before true enlightenment could take place a source of darkness must first be extinguished. This was the light or "candle" of human reason. This paradox lies at the heart of John Morgan's study of English puritan attitudes to reason, learning and education between the Elizabethan Settlement and the Civil War. Protestantism was not inherently unreasonable. Although he is usually misquoted, what Luther apparently said at Worms was that he would not budge unless he was proved wrong by both Scripture and reason; and within the orthodox Protestant tradition of which English Puritanism was a part the true understanding of Scripture in itself depended not upon extraordinary and irrational inspiration but upon man's reasonable faculties, exercised in sound philology and laborious exegesis. Yet these skills in themselves had no power to save. If anything the reverse. In Kent in 1550 the lay gospeller Henry Hurt pronounced that all errors had their origin among learned men. And in Germany Thomas Muntzer said that you could swallow 100,000 Bibles and still know nothing about God.

Yet sixteenth-century Protestants and Puritans were more insistent than any other movement in Christian history on their Church having a learned as well as a godly ministry, capable of instructing its people. John Foxe reported that by 1550 the Suffolk clothing town of Hadleigh was more like a university than a centre of industry, so ripe was the scriptural knowledge of its inhabitants. At one level the riddle is so readily soluble that Dr Morgan may be thought to make rather a meal of it. Knowledge of languages and texts was a necessary skill in order to comprehend and communicate the biblical scheme of salvation. Protestant learning was profound but confining, a mere technique. Puritans in the pulpit practised the virtue of art concealing art. Their learning, which was preparative to practical and pastoral skills, must not be paraded.

But in fact the paradox was part of a more extensive contradiction, the sense of which Morgan shares with another scholar of his own name, Professor Edmund S. Morgan, and never better stated than in the latter's little classic, *The Puritan Family* (1944). Puritans disparaged the merely civil virtues equivalent to good behaviour and induced by education as irrelevant to the only thing of ultimate importance: election to eternal life. Yet no organized human group has ever been more insistent on good order and "civility". The key to the problem evidently lies in what Perry Miller called the "marrow" of Puritan divinity, the "practical syllogism" which, within the terms of the divine covenant, derived precious assurance from apparent virtue which was not in itself salvific. Hence the Puritan insistence on the formation of character and on the formative institutions of home, congregation, school and university.

By reminding us that the role of reason was as secondary as that of all human works, Morgan has provided a valuable corrective to Perry Miller's emphasis on the puritan "mind" as a significant source of modern rationality. He also differs from those students of Puritanism who see it as more or less continuous with the programme of Renaissance humanism; rather the Puritans conducted a "Counter-Renaissance". Puritanism was not, as Miller almost suggested, a product of the radical logical method of Peter Ramus. That would be to make it altogether too ratiocinative. The native and essentially religious pragmatism of the Puritans did, however, find Ramism serviceable. "The great difficulty is to comprehend the religious fervency of the puritans which was the cure of their being" (Dietrich) that

is, for a post-religious age. Yet a post-rational age enjoys certain advantages in exercising a more truly historical appreciation of Puritan experience, for as Quentin Skinner would insist, the Puritans of the seventeenth century are not to be blamed for their failure to develop a "modern mind".

This is how Morgan's book begins, with ideas both fertile and elegantly expressed. Subsequently it falters in a series of chapters on organized aspects of the learning process (ministry, household, school, schoolmasters, university) which as information duplicate what has recently been written by others on these very institutions. The trouble seems to arise from categories and especially from the category of "Puritan". Morgan suggests that "Puritan" represents "existence" rather than "essence", and he scrupulously avoids speaking substantively and identically of "Puritanism". He knows that "Puritan" was an authentic specimen of the species Protestant, a difference of hue, not in itself a primary colour. And he admits that it must be a question whether puritan attitudes to learning and education in fact constituted a distinct approach.

But these cautious things having been said, caution is thrown to the winds. Morgan proceeds with his exploration of attitudes by quoting what are represented as the puritan opinions of known Puritans. Meanwhile, the true rather than spurious classification of much of this discourse is obscured. It was not only John Stockwood of Tonbridge who uttered the commonplace that the preacher should not turn the pulpit into a philosopher's chair but (probably) a hundred other authors, not all of them Puritans and some writing long before the sixteenth century. Only the gratuitous freedom with which "puritan" is deployed adjectivally sug-

Anglican accommodations

John Drury

GERARD REEDY, SJ
The Bible and Reason: Anglicans and Scripture in late seventeenth-century England
 184pp. Academic and University Publishers. £20.
 0812279751

"Not brilliant and perhaps not elegant, but not ignorant". Gerard Reedy's praise of the late seventeenth-century Anglican divines, in *The Bible and Reason*, is faint but just. Robert South, Bishop of Oxford, preaching on the fourteenth anniversary of the execution of Charles I, announced complacently, "I pretend not to . . . illuminations. I am neither Prophet, nor Prophetick Prelate." In the context of the occasion the disclaimer was reassuring. South was not going to lift the lid of the Pandora's box of apocalyptic typology and bring back the drums and fury of former—and all too recent—years. He went on to designate the method of his scriptural exegesis as "accommodation", not "design". In other words, his way with the biblical record was first to see it in its own realistic historical setting, then accommodate it to the needs of the present. This is still a familiar pulpit trope, steady rather than inspiring in effect, and depending on the firmness of the theological centre in the public mind. The same God was in charge of both the historic moments to which the preacher referred, past and present. A sober man could see the restoration of Charles II as "the most prodigious act of Providence" (Hyde) since the exodus of Israel from Egypt. But in line with a general Anglican distaste for arguments pushed too far, South was reticent about the detail of providential plans and operations. To go into all that, to seek "design" rather than to accommodate, would be to desert the plain and literal wisdom of historical daylight for the secret wisdom of historical darkness.

Two of the little scenes with which Reedy enlivens his book contrast the rival methods. On June 26, 1650, Cromwell, confided in by Edward Ludlow "that he was now accomplishing what was prophesied in the 110th Psalm". There was nothing general or vague about it. The exposition took an hour over the



A depiction of Adamram Byfield, of the Westminster Assembly of Divines (1645), reproduced from Religion in the Popular Prints 1600-1832 by John Miller (1972pp. Chadwyck-Healey. £40. 0859641708).

gests a persistent unease on Morgan's part. If it is self-evident that John Brinsley, a Puritan of puritan Christ's College, taught with puritan fervency at puritan Ashby de la Zouch, why rub it in so remorselessly?

Since it is not always significant that such "Puritans" were Puritans, their attitudes towards learning as a process and an institution were not necessarily distinctive, aside from their reservations about the ultimate value of human reason. Writing on the universities, Morgan finds little that was peculiar, apart from a technical objection to the degree of DD and a plan to involve scholars in regular Bible study; which was to adapt the university for the

seven verses. It was hot and uncannily precise, revealing the present actualization of God's ancient design in minute verbal detail from the Geneva Bible (the King James version would not have worked as well). At the same time, Edward Hyde in exile on Jersey was beginning work on his *Contemplations and Reflections on the Psalms of David, Applying those Devotions to the Troubles of the Times*. The coolness of contemplating and reflecting marks the difference from Cromwell. Hyde accommodated. He considered ancient Jewish history, "those very occasions, and the particular state that David was then in". Then he showed it to be "applicable to the several conditions of our life, which we may fall into, whether we are in Joy or Sorrow, in any Perplexity or Distress, or under any of God's Dispensations". Literal interpretation produced moral order and comfort.

Both of them believed that what happened was of divine dispensation. But Cromwell was ultra-theological about it and Hyde infra-theological. The lurid glamour of particular divine favour illuminated Cromwell as exegete. Hyde based himself in a more general and diverse humanity. With him, so long as there is joy or sorrow, perplexity or distress, the text has meaning. Such interpretation can survive even atheism.

We can see now that both kinds of exegesis are apt to the Bible, but to different books and traditions within it. Cromwell's fits Daniel and the apocalyptic strand. Hyde's fits the Joseph saga, or I and II Samuel, and the earlier historical tradition. They did not notice that. The canon was for them, as for the divines, unified and univocal. Critical knives were already cutting into its unity, which was threatened by the work of Richard Simon in France and John Toland and Anthony Collins in England. The divines knew about it and resisted it. But by taking up Hyde's accommodating interpretations as against Cromwell's "design", they backed the winner. The elaborate typologies of "design" were tightly woven into the sense of canon, accommodation less so. Every blow struck at the canon upset the typology.

Besides, the divines were public men in a world where typology was on the way out, plainness and human science on the way in. The Bible was to serve public order. If it was to magnify God and to depress Man (Sul-

purpose of a seminary. As for the seminary schooling, "puritan ministers, writers, schoolmasters have left no evidence that they planned a wholly new approach to knowledge". Historians who have advocated the term "puritan" as unhelpful have not heard, and indeed their advice was probably too drastic. But a difference of religious degree, or temperature, was not the basis of a separate philosophy or programme. Even so, it implied a special kind of "existence", books which deal with the puritan attitude to this and that continue to distort our perception of post-Reformation England. This has been said before and it seems that we shall have to say it.

A. L. Rowse believes that what has not been said before, because it has somehow not been noticed, is that the Puritan Revolution was iconoclastic and did a certain amount of material damage, so that nothing was ever the same again. Cathedrals were looted, about and lucky to survive at all. Castle palaces were slighted and levelled, their closed, pictures dispersed, talent blasted away from men cut off in their prime. And to the end? Revolutions do more harm than good. Why have we never known this? "Few historians have much visual sense." Rather (mostly Christopher Hill) are beset by "the various brands of nonsense post-thought". "daft people". Millenarians. Quakers. Levellers and Diggers were the "scum" of the revolution. "For of what value is the thought of people who can hardly think?" Just so. Rowse himself remarks, there are a goodly, redundant books on the subject of Puritans but none more so than this incoherently indulgent and thoroughly bilious effusion.

lingfleet), the man it was most to depress was the bumptious *illuminatus* with his typological shopping list.

In all that I have said so far the divines have figured less vividly than Cromwell and Hyde the Lord's anointed and the exile in voluntary privacy. That is a fair reflection of the state of affairs which Reedy describes. The accommodations of the divines were humdrum as makeshift, but useful. They were true to the present Anglican bishops and their still more makeshift efforts to steady a boat. That as now, it was a task requiring learning ("I ignorant") and political tact, with little prospect that their careful *bricolage* would combine anything new or luminous to religion or letters. Yet Locke admired their ethical acumen, and for several generations country parsons would reach down a volume of Tillotson's sermons on Saturday afternoons.

The really important work was done by the secluded men. Reedy makes a lot of Richard Simon as one such. He was amazing. "Hyde in 1682 [when Simon's *Histoire Critique* appeared in English translation and found its way into episcopal libraries] could in fact do with Simon." His fissiparous treatment of the Pentateuch was precisely the sort of breadth of order which ecclesiastics did not want. Yet beyond their eighteenth-century future was the nineteenth-century future was Simon. Reedy is right to bring him in powerfully to reveal the temporary nature of Anglican accommodations. As a Jesuit, Father Reedy relishes that, and wastes no time on Boswell attempts to bomb Simon out of existence. The same token, though, he fails to point out fair showings to two momentous non-Anglican figures comparable with Simon. Of Le Clerc, a Protestant, there is no need to say enough. Spinoza, the unbaptized Jew who communicated, is not patiently understood. Between shows a failure to distinguish between outward submission to the might of Leviathan and the inward love and knowledge due to Spinoza's lover God. This is a far from the usual scrupulous fairness of a valuable and graceful essay, and a sign that its author still vital enough to push his historical and taking sides. Spinoza too had a nineteenth-century future, with George Eliot and Matthew Arnold among his admirers.

Advertisements for himself

Hilary Spurling

MICHAEL FINCH
 G. K. Chesterton
 369pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £16.
 0297788582

"There is no more remarkable psychological element in history than the way in which a period can become suddenly unintelligible". wrote the much-admired and bang up-to-date young G. K. Chesterton, attempting in 1904 to resuscitate that darling of his grandparents' generation, G. F. Watts. "The thing always happens sharply: a whisper runs through the salons, Mr Max Beerbohm waves a wand and a whole generation of great men and great achievements suddenly looks mildewed and unmeaning." Figures like Watts and Chesterton, whose reputations ballooned across the sky for their contemporaries, are particularly baffling to a posterity confronted with the collapsed and mildewed remnants. Chesterton's efforts to raise the dust on Watts's behalf were characteristically strenuous, and it is clearly high time, half a century after his death, for a Chestertonian spring-cleaning.

Revered as a sage and prophet in his lifetime, Chesterton has not had much luck with his forecasts so far. He was against socialism, feminism and the theory of evolution. He was a rabid antisemite (long before Hitler, Chesterton suggested that Jews should be tolerated on condition they acknowledged their Jewishness by wearing special clothes). He did not hold with industrialization, and he ridiculed the notion that social conditions affect people. He was equally contemptuous of education for girls, holding that woman's place was in the home, cleaning, cooking and clearing up after her political superiors ("All sane men are fond of children, but if they have to look after them for long they would be bored, just as women would be bored if they sat in a stuffy hall talking for hours about Tariff Reform"). He was a staunch admirer of Mussolini. Above all he believed in the Roman Catholic Church and votes for men:

A man ought to vote with his head and heart, his soul and stomach, his eye for faces and his ear for music . . . If he has ever seen a fine sunset, the crimson colour of it should creep into his vote. If he has ever heard splendid songs, they should be in his ears as he makes the mystical cross.

No wonder a man needs a lot of looking

Crucial bruising

Anne Duchêne

JULIETTE HUXLEY
Leaves of the Tulip Tree
 248pp. John Murray. £12.95.
 071954288X

The widow of Julian Huxley, composing this book—very slowly, she says—during her eighties, chose to set it under the emblem, if not of mutilation, then at least of incompleteness. Her title comes from a legend about the evulsion from the Garden of Eden, where Eve under the pursuing angels' swords gathers as many flowers and branches as she can, but only snatches the end of the tulip tree's leaf, so that "the veins still branch towards the missing tip". "I have always loved the tulip tree and I have tried in this book to search for the tips of the leaves."

Born in 1896, Juliette Baillot was a very pretty French Swiss girl from Neuchâtel who was governess at Garsington to Lady Ottoline Morell's daughter for about two years, until, in 1919, she married Julian Huxley—or perhaps more accurately was married by him, "spell-bound under the flood of his words like a rabbit bewitched by a stool". She was twenty-three, he was thirty-one. Thereafter she shared his life—in Oxford and London, on African treks, in post-war Paris with Unesco—until he died in 1975.

Her memoirs therefore add some small berries to the vast bush of Bloomsburyana which seems a staple crop of British publishing now. Her devotion to Lady Ottoline, "the most wonderful person I have ever known", remains

after, if he cannot even vote without a red mist before his eyes and singing in his ears. Chesterton required more than most. As a schoolboy at St Paul's, he drove his teachers to distraction. "Too much for me", wrote his form master in 1887, when Gilbert was thirteen; "means well by me, I believe, but has an inconceivable knack of forgetting at the shortest notice . . .". Eight years later Chesterton's father wrote him out a set of travelling instructions more suitable, as his biographer points out, to a small boy about to cross London for the first time than to a young man in his twenties. Love letters to and from his future wife harp constantly on the need to keep himself clean, get his hair cut, clothes mended, buttons sewn on. In a letter written a few days after the sudden, devastating death of his fiancée's favourite sister, Chesterton was still boasting about his grubbiness ("Fear not, I shall wash myself") in terms that make it perfectly plain that he had no intention whatsoever of allowing her to depend on him.

This understanding was the basis of their marriage. His childlike impotence (any attempt at adult sexual relations was apparently abandoned, by mutual consent, after the wedding night) suited them both. "My dear, I couldn't earn our daily bread if I had to study timetables", he said complacently, when his wife questioned his notorious inability to catch a train. In the end, she reduced him to such infantile subjugation that he could barely function without her. Solicitors sent her legal documents marked with a cross, where Chesterton was to sign his name, and taxi-drivers were invited to help themselves out of his pockets. In later life he grew so fat he couldn't dress himself, tie his shoe laces or take a bath without a maid posted outside the door to mop up the mess. Stories of his famous unreliability, helplessness and forgetfulness were part of his endearing legend: it was as though he had become the public's baby as well as his wife's. "I like getting into hot water," he said archly, "it helps to keep me clean."

Martin Luther—a man he abominated—was, in Chesterton's view, the first person to go in for this sort of wholesale self-advertisement. "He was the first man who ever consciously used his consciousness; or what was later called his personality . . . he did in a very real sense make the modern world. He destroyed Reason; and substituted Suggestion." The same might, of course, be said of Chesterton

himself. He loved reason but shied away from any kind of intellectual rigour or concentration. His critical insight was sharp, his field comprehensive, his vigour invincible. T. S. Eliot found his book on Dickens a delight. Theologians said his *Thomas Aquinas* was the best thing on the subject. His journalism exerted a magnetic pull far greater than any single columnist, or even chat-show host, could hope for today. But he had the journalist's occupational disease of letting himself—and his admirers—off too lightly. "Taking trouble has never been a weakness of mine", he said, when reproached about his carelessness and laziness, his elementary mistakes over facts and dates. The cult of personality was the one thing he took pains about. He worked at it with industry and perseverance. Michael Finch has found a whole notebook Chesterton kept for practising his signature; and it was the exuberant, elephantine flourishes of his personality that, morally as well as literally speaking, overwhelmed him in the end. Audiences flocked to see him not so much for what he wrote or said as for how he did it. His *Short History of England* was dismissed in the TLS in 1917 on all counts, save "as an expression of Mr Chesterton's mentality". "As a lecture, it was a fiasco", reported the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* after a visit from this one-man circus, "but as an exhibition of Chesterton it was pleasing."

Chesterton quite deliberately made an exhibition of himself: it was his life's work, and he paid for it, though the cost is hardly hinted at in this fond, loyal and—for such an enquiring subject—surprisingly incurious biography. Finch is interested in facts and dates but not in the fretfulness, frustration and mysterious ailments which dogged Mrs Chesterton's private life. Nor is he concerned with the increasing rapidly, mechanical repetitiveness and vanity of Chesterton's own writings, for which both had sacrificed so much. "This is what we now call Personality", wrote Chesterton, describing a particularly tiresome piece of showing-off on Luther's part: "After that it was called Advertisement or Salesmanship." Passages like this suggest that Chesterton understood his own Lutheran tendencies only too well, and was helpless to resist them. His sales patter got out of hand, as when, for instance, he argued that in nearly 2,000 years since the Church was founded, Christendom has been getting steadily better—"more lucid, more level-headed, more reasonable in its hopes, more healthy in

one had to believe that he was right—it took me years to discover it might not be so." (The note of stout if slow Swiss independence reminds one that this wife and mother of biologists elsewhere eloquently argues her own belief that evolutionary theory fails to explain the variety of creation.)

In the initial shock, when "maggots in the brain" threatened her own health and sanity, kind friends sent her on a therapeutic trip to Baghdad. Lady Ottoline chose her a red dress, "the colour of life and hope". Wells wrote kindly bracing notes, and on return she dutifully, urged by her husband, took lovers—the first staid but supportive, the second (drowned in the war) more liberating, so that she found her "own growing-point" again and could reaffirm belief in life. She also found in herself a taste and talent for sculpting. She mentions no more lovers, and there were still several decades of restored married life through which to carry the scar.

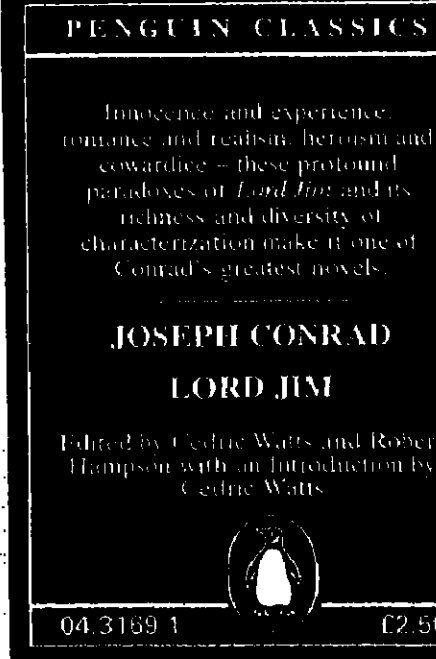
It can all be lucidly and very loyally assessed now, of course: her own immaturity and insufficiencies, her husband's rationality and unreason compounded by the peculiar fate of being an elder son among Huxleys and Arnolds. It seems just, though, to say that the whole book is written round this crucial bruising. The damaged leaf grew green and looked glossy, but the tip was gone. The more poignant, therefore, to note Julian's acknowledgement of the matter in his own two-volume memoirs. A grisly trip to Dar-es-Salaam, he noted in mid-paragraph, was remarkable, among other things, for "the presence of a very attractive American girl, with whom I fear I flirted (she took it much more seriously than I did)".



A drawing by Chesterton reproduced from The Art of G. K. Chesterton by Alzina Stone Dale (114pp. Loyola University Press, distributed in the UK by Alden Mackley, 15 Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford MK40 3SA. £20. 082940516X).

its instincts, more humorous and cheerful . . . — thanks to Christian common sense: "and nowhere in this sad world are boys happier in apple-trees or men in more equal chorus singing as they tread the wine, than under the fixed flash of this instant and intolerant enlightenment . . .". If this means anything, it seems to be that Catholic boys are happier stealing apples, and Catholic men make better singers, than non-believers.

One of Chesterton's closest friends said he died of a broken heart. Perhaps he did. Perhaps he knew that the forgetfulness he had cultivated so assiduously since boyhood had finally caught up with him. It seems to have been a family failing. When Chesterton's only sister died at the age of eight, their father turned her portrait to the wall, forbade his wife to mention her name and insisted that the whole family forget she had ever existed. This remained Chesterton's invariable strategy for coping with things he found difficult to face. By the end of his life he was not simply forgetting to catch trains, fasten his buttons, or carry on with the rest of the trivial business of living, which he kept a wife to do for him. He had forgotten what he wanted to say, and, like a great many celebrated old journalists, he had grown so used to the familiar, reassuring booming of his own voice that he had long since forgotten to attach any meaning to the words it used.



Making for the fringe

Ahdaf Soueif

LAILA ABOU SAIF
A Bridge Through Time: A memoir
282pp. Quartet, £9.95.
070432587 X
EARL L. SULLIVAN
Women in Egyptian Public Life
223pp. Syracuse University Press, 1600
Jamesville Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210.
\$29.95.
0815623542

Laila Abou Saif's *A Bridge Through Time* spans a period of almost twenty-five years: from her betrothal in Cairo in 1958 to her departure for America and a teaching job in the University of New Haven a couple of years ago. There are many faults to be found in these memoirs. At the most basic level, almost every Arabic word that occurs is inaccurate. To take the most flagrant examples: the word which President Abd el-Nasser used to describe the defeat of 1967 – and which came to identify the entire era from 1967 to 1973 – was *naksa* not *nakbar*. The word used by Anwar Sadat when he wanted to allow a degree of diversity of political opinion but was reluctant to condone any *ahzab* (parties) was *munahir* (forums) not *nawahir*. The oft-heard Islamic cry is *Allahu-Akbar* not *Akhar*. The *karavan* (not *qaravun*), which still sings in some parts of Cairo, is the curlew not the nightingale, and so on. These mistakes embody one of the reasons why Ms Abou Saif found it so difficult to get on in Egypt: demised, divorced and American-educated at a time when none of these things was

common, she was also demanding to be taken seriously as the first Egyptian woman stage director – and she was making this demand in flawed Arabic.

This verbal inaccuracy is mirrored by a factual one: the *mogama* is not an "octagonal building of about nine floors" but a rectangular eleven-storeyed one. An apartment in Zamalek would not overlook a "tributary of the Nile" but the Nile itself. "My country, my country" is not merely "a patriotic song" but the Egyptian National Anthem. The 1952 burning of Cairo was more or less established as the doing of *Misr al Fatah* (a neo-fascist society) and not the Muslim Brotherhood. High-fliers pre-1966 did not go to the Sheraton Hotel (which had not yet been built) but to the Semiramis "Night and Day". The list could go on. One would have thought that Quartet, part of the Namara Group, would be equipped with an editor who can pick up this sort of thing – but apparently not.

In its straightforward bits, *A Bridge Through Time* is very readable. But then suddenly it appears that a need is felt for some "style" – and that's when things go wrong: here is Ms Abou Saif observing the felucca boatmen on the Nile: "These boatmen's lives had not changed for thousands of years. Yet I found a strange comfort in observing the life of my ancestors reassert itself with primeval confidence, the still point of Egypt." And here she is entering a seminar room: "I found an esoteric group of Arab and Western scholars . . . engrossed in learned talk."

Since the book is dedicated to Gloria (Steinem), and since Laila Abou Saif was obviously impressed by the "statuesque

women of marble and bronze resilience" she met in New York City, it is not surprising to come across some feminist jargon: "I loathed this biological self which men invaded with their penises and their surgical instruments."

But the author has not suffered unduly at the hands of men. She was fortunate in having a liberal, supportive and distinguished father (her love for him and for her dead sister, Asma, is one of the more endearing human qualities in the book), and even though her marriage was arranged – as was the custom – at an early age, her husband appears to have been a gentleman absolutely *comme il faut*; he accompanied her on study trips to the United States, never stood in her way, went with her to abort the child he so badly wanted, and, finally, gave her that almost unheard-of thing: a Coptic divorce. The one thing he could not do was inspire her with passion and Laila, unlike most women in Egypt, chose to terminate her pregnancy, abandon the marriage and set up on her own to pursue her theatre career. Without her family's support (which manifested itself practically in a flat and a Mercedes), it would have been impossible. With it, it was tough. But she is a tough lady. She created an innovative fringe theatre in a historic building in the medieval quarter of the city and worked there for eight years bringing "theatre to the people" once a year during the holy month of Ramadan. If the book gives no clue to the marginality of her work, or to the fact that there was a great deal of theatre thriving elsewhere in the city, then that is because of a fairly high level of self-centredness in its author. But then again, it is *her* book, and she needed a degree of egocentricity in order to pursue a

career at all.

Whatever its faults, *A Bridge Through Time* has its heart in the right place. It captures the climate in Egypt from 1967 to 1982 and describes some significant and authentic incidents. If the frankness with which it is written signals that Ms Abou Saif has now left Egypt for good, then that would be a pity.

Earl Sullivan's *Women in Egyptian Public Life* is a statistical survey which will hardly make riveting reading for the non-specialist, does, however, provide some interesting information. Discarding women in "traditional" spheres such as education, medicine and civil service, Professor Sullivan concentrates on women in business and politics. He finds that the class a woman is born into has a profound influence on her activity in later life: that almost all his subjects (selected from what he terms the political and business elite) are also finds that while upper-middle-class women tend to go into politics and the professions, purely upper-class women go straight into big business. He finds that (unlike Laila Abou Saif) women mostly work from within the framework of a supportive family while they (at least overtly) put before their careers. An exception to this is women in "opposition" – a dangerous place to be – who tend to have significantly higher divorce rates than their sisters in the NDP (the official government party). In other words, women won't toe one line are unlikely to toe another. If the chapter on presidential wives seems somewhat trusting, Professor Sullivan disarms by freely admitting to the limitations of foreigner writing about his adoptive country.

Bodichon needed immortal life, perhaps, to give room to all her energy and to sustain her hope of resolutions which her tough-mindedness told her could not be achieved here.

Sheila R. Herstein's plain journeywoman style provides us with an austere and serviceable chronicle of Barbara Bodichon's life, though there are some very bad misprints for a Yale book ("Ben Johnson", "privileged", "exhilarating"). Herstein gives us much valuable information and an excellent bibliography. Her spartan tone works well in descriptions of Bodichon's endurance but she somehow misses the panache and gaiety of the personality. Of Bodichon's love-affair with John

Chapman, Herstein comments, "The scenes had melodramatic overtones: the characters were all drawn slightly larger than life. Rather, they were as large as life. The book's research will be immensely useful and gives fresh views of figures such as Mary Howitt, as well as thoroughly consolidated accounts of marriage laws, the campaign against the property-laws, and the early suffrage movement." Needs to be supplemented by a reading of the subject's own writing and letters if the reader is to appreciate the ardent, trenchant Barbara Bodichon, to feel her presence across the years, and to engage with the questions her life and writing still raise for us.

two new images – the saint and the sufferer – in the second half of the nineteenth century. The saint was the full-time wife and mother, who kept the home running smoothly; the sufferer believed in equal rights and responsibilities for women and men, and sought deliverance for her sex from what was seen as male oppression. The end of the century saw an unprecedented movement of population. Rural Americans flocked to the cities, city people travelled to the prairies and there was a massive influx of European immigrants. This was behind a series of new images of the housewife, including that of the drudge. Further changes occurred during the period between 1950 and 1970 which witnessed the rise and fall of the "supermother", at the time her maternal care and competence were regarded as crucial for a healthy America. Today, claims Ogden, as more married women undertake paid work, become single parents and set up lesbian households, new images evolve.

The depth of historical scholarship in *The Great American Housewife* is rather thin, and the various images of housewives are drawn in insufficient detail. One is never sure whether they are based on ideas which were presented in domestic fiction and household manuals or on the everyday reality of women's lives as recorded in their unpublished letters and diaries. Not enough attention is given to social class and racial division among housewives. In the final section, where various present-day feminist views are discussed, the coverage is inadequate.

Aspects of *The Great American Housewife* are, though, fascinating and moving – in par-

ticular, the rich data in diaries and letters of long-forgotten housewives. From these we learn about the day-to-day experiences of women such as Bertha Burdett, Mary Jane and Anna Fader Haskell (Haskell, for example, the wife of a socialist lawyer, recorded with remarkable frankness, in six story volumes, the ups and downs of her daily struggle to keep a home going on a dwindling family income). Women's lives are different from men's, and especially when they are housewives. Ogden's book is to be greatly welcomed for sharpening that point.

Waged Work: A reader edited by Feminist Review (283pp. Virago, £5.95, 0 86068 8011) contains a collection of articles on the debate on the changing role of women in paid employment: "Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination" by Mandy Snell, "The Reserve Army of Labour, 1974-1979" by Irene Bruegel, "Sex and Skill" by Anne Phillips and Barbara Taylor, "Third World Manufacturing" by Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson, "The Making of Male Power" by Cynthia Cockburn, "Theories of Women's Employment" by Veronica Beechey, "Women and Trade Unions" by Nicola Charles, "Black Women and the Economic Crisis" by Amina Mama, "Equality and the European Community" by Catherine Bell, "Going Private" by Angela Coyle and "Homeworking and the Control of Women's Work" by Sheila Allen and Carol Wainwright. All twelve essays were first published in the *Feminist Review*.

Traveller in tartan

Dervla Murphy

ALASTAIR SCOTT
Scott Free: A journey from the Arctic to New Mexico
251pp. John Murray, £10.95.
07195 42537

If travelling fruitfully is an art, Alastair Scott is an artist. His travels have been treble fruitful: for himself, for those he met on his 194,000-mile journey around the world and for his readers. Nowadays thousands of young men and women are in constant motion around the world and quite a few of them write about their trips, more or less (usually less) successfully. But Scott is not one of this herd. He is not drifting, or escaping, or crusading, or record-breaking, or fund-raising, or "looking for himself". In one sense he is a perfectly ordinary, well-balanced, contented young man; in another sense, however, he is blissfully eccentric – proof that that celebrated breed, the dotty British traveller, is not yet extinct.

Alastair Scott planned ahead shrewdly, but not constrictingly. He would devote five years to his journey, which he saw as an apprenticeship to a career as a freelance photographer. (Judging by this book's glorious illustrations, it was an apprenticeship well spent.) He would wear a kilt, "to help break down the ethnic barriers and silent stares that surround a stranger", and carry bagpipes strapped to the

end of his rucksack; by making music he hoped to earn some suppers. He would start in the far north, where perhaps he could pick up a few jobs and save enough money to maintain himself in the United States and Canada. Otherwise he had no fixed plan; he just let things happen and made the most of them when they did, sometimes in situations that would have driven lesser beings on to the first plane back to Edinburgh.

The adventure began in Iceland, in mid-winter, where he painted boats. For three months he lived in the Akureyri Youth Hostel and found the locals friendly and generous, but with "an aura of complacency about them, understandable in an insular people who can grow bananas in the Arctic. They feel as indestructible as their sagas and put their trust in cod."

A job on a trawler took Scott to the Faroes, and then to Greenland, which at that time "had the world's highest per capita consumption of alcohol. The average person over the age of fourteen drank two hundred bottles of beer each month." From Dakolshava to Thule he worked as a ship's cook, and there he was befriended by the Inuit whom he helped to kill a narwhal. He explains, "These people were not to be compared to the commercial whalers of other countries. They were not driving the whale to extinction in selfish and desperate efforts to extract what revenue remained in an industry that was dying through exploitation and indiscriminate greed. These hunters were doing no more than they had always done by taking a few whales as a necessary supply of

food for the winter months ahead."

After a year after leaving home, and two-fifths of the way through this book, Scott flew from Thule to New York, thus sustaining the ultimate in culture shock. He wrote home, "Three hectic but fascinating days here are enough for someone who is not a city person", and next morning he began to hitch-hike south. At first he felt a trifle apprehensive about thumbing – "most Americans advised against it" – but soon he had perfected his technique and discovered that abundance of goodwill towards strangers which exists throughout the United States.

Apart from his distaste for cities, Scott is a magnificently resilient and flexible traveller with a genius for adapting to his company of the moment: Icelandic mechanics, Faroese fishermen, Inuit hunters, Alaskan oilmen, Newfoundland farmers, Los Angeles policemen, Albertan Hutterites, world-reforming Rainbow People (some stark naked) conferring in a quiet wooded corner of Washington State. If there was someone or something odd in a region, Scott found them or it. He himself – warm-hearted and witty – is a major ingredient in this book. But no less important are those he met and whose conversations he recorded with a novelist's ear for dialogue. He is enthusiastically interested in people and places, history and customs. Rarely does he find his surroundings or companions tedious or irritating; he is tolerant, not naive.

Scott Free ends in New Mexico as the author turns south towards Latin America – and the rest of the world – leaving readers impatient for his second volume.

In quest of the Quetzal

John A. C. Greppin

JONATHAN EVAN MASLOW
Bird of Life, Bird of Death: A naturalist's journey through a land of political turmoil
249pp. New York: Simon and Schuster.
\$17.95.
067152738 X

Jonathan Maslow, a naturalist of sorts and now a popularizer of note, went off to Guatemala to find the male Quetzal, that stunning bird of iridescent greens, blues and reds whose tail measures six feet and whose principal food is an exotic variety of avocado. Maslow eventually sighted the bird but along the way saw life at its worst among the pathetic Indians of Guatemala. He tells us that the Quetzal is the Bird of Freedom, and hard to find in Guatemala; but the Black Vulture, he notes, known locally as the Zopilote, is ubiquitous. Here, of course, is the stuff of allegory, and Maslow lets it flow, all muddy and roiled, for death is commonplace in Guatemala, and freedom only an expression.

But the central theme of the book is the Quetzal bird, and Maslow's hunt for it. Many people, from funded ornithologists to amateur bird-watchers, have gone off to Central America to see the Quetzal, which is well worth seeing. It is a member of the family Trogonidae, and falls, in the phylogenetic scale, between the hummingbird and the kingfisher. The characterizing feature of the Trogonidae is their peculiar feet: toes one and two face forwards while three and four face backwards, a configuration which requires some delicacy of concentration when the Quetzal wants to sit on a limb, for in this heterodactyl arrangement the toes inadequately oppose each other. The birds, considering their clusiveness, have been well described. The redoubtable A. E. Skutch searched them out in Guatemala and Costa Rica in the 1930s and published his vivid description of them in 1944, in the journal *Condor*. And Alexander Wetmore, who prowled Central America in the mid-century, described them in his four-volume study of the birds of Panama.

Not surprisingly, it is the incredible tale of the male Quetzal that attracts most attention. It has always done so; the Pre-Columbian Mayan Indians attached it to their priests' vestments; the Spanish *conquistadores* bore it home in wonder; and collectors still seek it out, stealthily. Couple this uniqueness with the more prosaic fact that the Quetzal is good to eat as well, and you have a bird that won't last much longer.

In north-west Guatemala, in the highlands near Lake Atitlan, there is a town called Quezaltenango, or in Mayan, "place of the Quetzal", a logical place for Maslow to begin his search. But by the time he gets there, the Quetzals have long been killed off. Maslow is directed instead to the steamy mountains on the Caribbean side. There, if he braves the government soldiers and the anti-government Freedom Fighters, he will find his birds in their only reserve, the Biotope del Quetzal. He needs only to rent a four-wheel drive vehicle (he does this by offhandedly claiming to be with the CIA) and set off through a desolate countryside.

He finds them, and like all before him, focuses on the Quetzal's tail. Maslow states flatly that the male Quetzal, when sitting on the nest, which Quetzals always place in the hollow of a tree, flies head first into the hollow and sets, leaving his magnificence to recline without. Others say no, claiming that the Quetzal enters

his hole in the tree head first and circles around till his tail is all but pulled in and lining the inside of the hole, and then sets. I find no scientific description which will seriously allow of both possibilities.

Maslow writes with the sour vision of a man with a chronic hangover, who will remember the funeral cortege, casket-laden and struggling through the streets of Chichicastenango, but entirely ignore the dignity of the procession; a man who will judiciously describe the Zopilote eating what vultures normally eat but somehow imply that it reflects not only on the government, but on the actual people themselves. The dust-jacket describes him as a naturalist, but he makes a lot of silly errors (reporting for example, that the journal *Condor*, now in its eighty-eighth year, is defunct). But he is also a truly powerful writer and an original. This is his second book (*The Owl Papers* appeared in 1983) and I look forward to more.

American Newsreel, Japan 1945

No one must ever look down on the Son of Heaven.

When the cameraman arrived with Motosodori in the palace limousine to take pictures of the Emperor and found him squatting on the sea-shore fishing seaweed out of a rockpool, this seemed to pose a problem.

But the living descendant of the Sun Goddess, creator of heaven and earth, whose sky-warriors had willingly dived into enemy ships and whose premier General Hideki Tojo had taken on his own head all responsibility for his country's war crimes, was tired of being a god.

He would rather be mortal. Something he'd learned in all the hours on the shore with his magnifying glass, researching into amoeba as the tide ran out of Segami Bay, was that one way of surviving is to be indistinguishable from sand.

VICKI FEAVER

In search of the wholly Gael

David Profumo

DEREK COOPER
The Road to Mingulay: A view of the Western Isles
226pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £12.95.
0710201788

Something odd seems to come over writers when they cross the Minch; the results – for Barrie, Ransome, MacNeice – are coy, and out of character. Perhaps it's all that ozone and mythical gloom, but the Gaelic lifestyle has been the subject of repeated literary nostalgia, at once patronizing and sentimental, so it is to Derek Cooper's credit once again (as in his *Hebridean Connection*, 1977) that he squarely resists such specious enticements in favour of a realistic view. As a companion he admirably combines the critic with the nosophile, for while there is no doubting his fierce affection for things properly Hebridean, his portrait of this remarkable culture is tempered with a political anger at the disturbing neglect from which it has suffered.

This is the chronicle of a trip begun in 1983 and involving a journey southwards through the "Long Island", from industrial Stornoway (as far distant from London as is Prigue) down to the now uninhabited island of Mingulay. Part pilgrimage and part topography, the account blends autobiography with observation, as, during the course of a year, Cooper tracks down a wide variety of islanders including relations and urban fugitives alike. He visits *en route* the peat-wastes of Lewis, a crofter harvesting sea-ware in the shadow of the rocket-range on Uist, and the inhabitants of Barra – where Compton Mackenzie once penned a 100,000-word novel in thirty-one days flat. The picture presented is depressing and enchanting by turns, like Gus Wylie's accompanying photographs: the wind-scoured beauty of the landscape carries the scars of economic decline and the vestiges of abandoned projects. You don't have to be a sentimentalist to discover in the collapsed shielings and deserted lazy-beds the badges of a proud and recently flourishing civilization.

Cooper is insistent about the causes of such decay, for he sees the historical basis of land-ownership – often absentee, and increasingly corporate – as the root of this underdevelopment. It is true that until recently most economic enterprise was at the expense of the islanders themselves. An exception was Lord Leverhulme's benevolent efforts after the First World War to revitalize the resources of Harris and Lewis out of his own pocket, though only Macfisheries and some half-built factories remain as his monuments. Hebridean history suggests a systematic impoverishment of the available resources – kelp, fish and manpower – with nothing comparable in return. Even transport and tourism have been slow to develop, and the initiative seems to depend on the mainland. As a distinguished writer about food (and whisky), Cooper is well qualified to criticize the abysmal travellers' fare, and it would appear that a gastronomic tour of the Hebrides is about as enthralling a prospect as an architectural appreciation of South Mimms, though the crofting diet has certainly improved since Martin Martin's day (1703), when it comprised "bread and water, and a snuff of tobacco".

The islanders have probably suffered as much at the hands of do-gooders as from those intent on exploitation, but there are definite signs of revival. The EEC offers agricultural subsidies, and the name of Booker McConnell means fish-farming, but the overall impression given by this articulate and atmospheric book is that the Western Isles today are characterized by contrasts and an uneasy osmosis between tradition and innovation. Cooper pinpoints these details acutely: the annual *gugra* (gannet) cull still takes place not far from the oil-base of Lewis. Offshore, and tame seals plunge in the harbour choked by consumer jetsam, while some crofters have planted out durable suburban gnomes. But despite all of this, the culture of the Gael rekindles itself like the smouldering of a fire.

Jerusalem notes

Christopher Hitchens

The dispute between the religious and the secular interpretations of life and culture has always been an issue in Jerusalem, but it now bids fair to become *the* issue. A poll commissioned by the Jerusalem Municipality and conducted by Hanoche Smith found that twice as many people were worried about the conflict between secular and religious as were worried about the Arab-Jewish question. In Tel Aviv, a proposal to name a street after Heinrich Heine has been vetoed by the authorities because the poet abandoned Judaism. And though the public face of the argument is the easiest to apprehend (religious zealots burn down bus shelters with "suggestive" advertisements; secular militants paint pigs and nude women on synagogue walls) it is becoming a stronger and stronger theme in literary life as well. Whereas in the novels of S. Y. Agnon the exchanges between the religious and the sceptical were conducted with humour and gentleness, today's debate has more than a trace of rancour. Simon Lovvish's new novel *The Death of Moshe-Gur* speaks wittily of "The Sons of Judah" who "did not eat meat and always faced the sun even if that meant walking backwards. In Jerusalem, unfortunately, they were not conspicuous." In his wonderful novel, *The Lover*, A. B. Yehoshua was more restrained but hardly less scathing. He depicted the ultra-orthodox of the Mea Sharim quarter and said, "No, they were free men, exempt from military service and affairs of the state, making their way with dignity through a united Jerusalem looking down with scorn and strangeness on the secular people who constituted for them a kind of framework and a means."

The most outspoken and combative opponent of the godly is, however, Amos Oz. In 1982 he addressed a meeting of the devout and demanded of them,

What, in truth, has happened to you in the sphere of spiritual creativity? Why are most of the creative people in this country, heaven help us, "leftists"? Is it a conspiracy? Has Damascus bought out Hebrew literature, lock, stock and barrel? How do you explain the fact that the artistic, ideological and philosophical creativity in Israel is these days taking place — not all of it, but most and perhaps even the best of it — in a defeated, wounded, crumbling camp?

A few weeks ago, writing from his base in Kibbutz Hulda for his newspaper *Davar*, Oz went even further and proposed that Israel be partitioned between the believers and the secular. "If the believing community is expanding, believing that the Messiah is at the gate, then no compromise is possible and from their point of view there is no room for tolerance or forbearance . . . the logic of messianism leads to partition."

Almost every literary or artistic pursuit is touched in some way by an echo of Oz's model proposal.

Secular Israelis take comfort from the heroic period of Hebrew culture, especially from Hebrew poetry in Spain in the eleventh and

FIFTY YEARS ON

The TLS of August 15, 1936, carried a review by G. C. Wheeler of V. Gordon Childe's *Man Makes Himself*, from which the following extracts are taken:

Professor Childe has written this outline of the prehistory and early history of culture in the Near East and Europe not as a manual of archaeology but to be "readable to those who are not concerned with the detailed problems about which specialists argue heatedly". . . . [He] is careful to point out the continuity of prehistory and what is more usually looked on as truly "history". . . . One of the conceptions which a philosophical historian has to deal with is "progress." Since the War and its aftermath, Professor Childe points out, its reality has been widely called into question — but then indeed it is an idea of modern growth only. Today instead of the hearty belief of last century we often find "a pessimistic or mystical attitude." In ethnology, too, the German historical school has put forward a scientific doctrine of the Fall of man, while "the Fascist philosophy

twelfth centuries. Although poets like Yehudi Halevi and Moses ibn Ezra were pious enough, they rejected obscurantism and sectarianism and frequently wrote in Arabic. There were periods between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries when their works were not allowed to be printed because of Orthodox disapproval, and even now some of the more broad-minded verses do not appear in popular editions or translations. Many contemporary writers and critics in Israel point to this epoch as a forerunner of the present one; a sort of Jewish reformation and counter-reformation, when a poet like Manuel Romano could be excommunicated by the rabbinate for saying in one of his satires that he preferred to go to hell because only the ugly women would go to heaven.

The early medieval Hebrew poets in Spain also incur suspicion to this day because they wrote homosexual love poetry as well as heterosexual and bisexual odes. Homosexual yearning was not automatically forbidden by the religious, but homosexual activity was. With what joy and delight, then, did a secular friend of mine at the Hebrew University read me a poem by ibn Ezra, of a kind that would have outraged the puritans of the day. All you need to know is that a fawn is a boy:

The desire of my heart and my eyes is to have a fawn in my right hand and a cup at my right side. Many are accusing me and I will not hear them. Come, fawn, and I will defeat them. And time will finish them and death will strike them. Come fawn, come and give me food from the nectar of your lips

Until I am filled. Why are they turning my heart? If because of the sin and because of the offence I will sin in your beauty for God is there.

After this the poem becomes rather graphic. Ibn Ezra also wrote religious and Zionist poetry, and Halevi died on his way to Palestine, so the secular seem to have a point in arguing that the great tradition in Jewish letters does not license any authoritarian distinction between the sacred and the profane.

Apart from polemic, the special art form of Israel is music. Jerusalem is alive with concerts, and everywhere there are schoolchildren with instrument cases and sheet music. The radio devotes an extraordinary amount of air time to classical broadcasts, and conductors are household names. This means that the battle over Wagner and (to a lesser extent) Strauss is carried on with unusual vigour. Wagner's music is under a formal and informal ban. The sale of records and tapes is no longer prohibited, though it is unknown for a music shop to display them ostentatiously. The State-owned radio and television will not transmit Wagner, except in snatches for the purpose of illustration. Only his name, once prohibited, can be broadcast. Every now and then, attempts are made to break the unspoken ban on public performances. Things have improved since Jascha Heifetz, the great violinist, had a piece of Wagner arranged for the violin and included it in one of his concerts in the 1950s. He was assaulted and had his hands battered with an

expounded most openly by Horst Hitler and his academic supporters, but sometimes masquerading as eugenics in Britain and America," identifies progress with a mystical biological evolution. To settle their doubts, says Professor Childe, men should turn to history; and one purpose in this book is "to suggest that, viewed from an impersonal scientific standpoint, history may still justify a belief in progress," not only as we believed in it in the heyday of a bygone summer but also in our own more wintry day. . . . Professor Childe, who seems to be much impressed by the Marxian "realist conception of history" with the alluring simplicity of its economic stress, holds that "history is tending to become cultural history." He suggests that the historian's "progress" may be the equivalent of the zoologist's evolution; for prehistory, while it carries written history backwards, also "carries on natural history forwards," and is "a bridge between human history and the natural sciences of zoology, palaeontology, and geology."

iron bar. Two years ago, Zubin Mehta conducted the Israeli Philharmonic and included a Wagner overture in the concert. Although the piece came at the end, and even though Mehta announced that those who might be offended would therefore miss nothing by leaving, there was an energetic disruption (led by a Polish convert from Catholicism) and the performance was abandoned.

Since that incident, a book has been published entitled, *Who's Afraid of Richard Wagner?* Several aspects of a controversial personality. The collection includes Wagner's own notorious anti-Jewish writings, Bernard Shaw on the Perfect Wagnerite and other more or less contemporary writings by Mann and Baudelaire. Almost all the Israeli contributors to the book now favour the lifting of the ban on Wagner. Typical is the argument of Yehuda Cohen, a composer and former music editor for Israeli Radio, who has lectured at the Bayreuth Festival. Without defending Wagner as a person, he writes that a nation like Israel, so much threatened by various cultural boycotts, has "a sevenfold obligation" not to replicate their mentality. He also argues that it is bad enough to deprive those who do like Wagner, but even worse to withhold him from those who might come to admire him.

In a related letter in the *Jerusalem Post*, the flautist Uri Toepfritz urges that the Israeli Philharmonic celebrate its forthcoming fiftieth anniversary by admitting Richard Strauss "Nazi collaborator and anti-Semite (both sporadically)" to its repertoire. Toepfritz argues that Strauss saved at least one Jew, his daughter-in-law, and that the playing of his symphonic poems, written at the end of the last century, would enrich both players and audience.

Again, there will be orthodox opposition, as in the past, to concerts featuring "Gentile" culture. But is this not to make the same blunder as those who once spoke of "Jewish science"?

On a different sector of the musical front, there is about to be a revival of the extremely successful Hebrew version of *My Fair Lady*. It will be performed at the Habima Theatre in Tel Aviv under the title of *Givri Hanava*, with Shlomo Bar-Shavit taking the part of Higgins and the popular "Rita" as Eliza. How on earth,

you ask, do the vernacular combats of *Coste* Garden and Bow translate into Hebrew? Very well, is the answer. *Barad* means "hail," *Yael* means "fell." *Be'Seefarad* means "in Spain." "Ba-rad, pom-pom, Ya-rad, Be Sefar - ad!" think she's go it.

The controversy over Claude Lanzmann's tape documentary *Shoah* is unlikely to slacken with the revelation that it was financed, to the tune of about \$850,000, by Menachem Begin. Elyahu Ben-Elisar, who was director-general of Begin's office when he was Prime Minister, has revealed that the donation, which is not acknowledged in the film's credits, was made on Begin's express instruction through the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs. The film's critics say that *Shoah* depicts all Poles people in an unfavourable light, and conveys a surreptitious charge of racial blood-guilt. Since this is a charge made publicly and privately by supporters of Mr Begin's Revisionist movement, it might have been better to admit the contribution they made to the genesis of the film.

About five years ago, the Jerusalem Poetry Workshop was convened in order to act as a kind of melting pot for the different languages and cultures represented in the city. Many of the poets were monoglot; others were able to write in more than one tongue, or to translate. The result is a new magazine devoted both to poetry and prose, with contributions in various languages; English being the *lingua franca*. Even here, there are traces of the religious and confessional strife which has disfigured and which still disfigures the city. In Eva Shabat's poem "Liturgica", for instance, figures are discerned singing psalms in Jerusalem:

Singing psalms — the sons and daughters of those who slaughtered the sons and daughters of those who wrote them . . .

The magazine is called *Seven Gates* and can be contacted at 214/36 Jaffa Road, Jerusalem 97801.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Abel is a lecturer in Latin American History at University College London. His *Jose Marti: Revolutionary democrat* will be published this autumn.

J. B. Bury is a bibliographer and architectural historian.

Patrick Collinson's most recent book is *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism, 1580-1680*. Eduardo Crawley is the editor of the *Latin American Newsletter*. His *Dictators Never Die: A portrait of Nicaragua and the Somozas* was published in 1979. He is the author of *A House Divided: Argentina 1880-1980, 1984*.

Winton Dean is the author of *Handel and the Opera Seria, 1965*.

Filippo Donini was formerly Director of the Italian Institute in London.

John Drury's most recent book, *The Parables in the Gospels: History and allegory*, was reviewed in the TLS of July 25.

Barbara Everett is a Senior Research Fellow at Somerville College, Oxford. Her *Poets in their Time* will be published this autumn.

Peter France is Professor of French at the University of Edinburgh, and author of *Diderot, 1984*, in the *Past Masters Series*.

P. N. Furbank's *Italo Svevo: The man and the writer* was published in 1966. His most recent book is *Unlikely Pleasures: Or, the idea of social class, 1985*.

John A. C. Greppin is Professor of Linguistics at Cleveland State University and the editor of the *Annual of Armenian Linguistics*. His most recent publications include *Classical and Middle Armenian Bird Names, 1982*.

Francis Haskell is Professor of Fine Art at the University of Oxford and author of *Rediscoveries in Art: Some aspects of taste, fashion and collecting in England and France, 1976*.

P. N. Johnson-Laird is Assistant Director of the Medical Research Council Applied Psychology Unit, and a Fellow of Darwin College, Cambridge. His books include *Mental Models, 1983*.

Brian Lee is Head of the American Studies Department at the University of Nottingham. His *The American Novel, 1965-1980*, will be published shortly.

Anna Laura Lepeschy is the author of *Narrativa e teatro fra due secoli: Verga, Invergnizio, Svevo, Pirandello, 1984*.

R. A. Markus is Professor Emeritus of Medieval History at the University of Nottingham. He is the author of *Christianity in the Roman World, 1974*.

Julian Moynahan is a Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is working on a critical study of the tradition of Anglo-Irish Literature from Maria Edgeworth to early Beckett and Elizabeth Bowen.

Dervil Murphy's *Eight Feet in the Andes* was published in 1983. Her *Muddling Through in Madagascar* came out last year.

Martha Nussbaum is Professor of Philosophy, Classics and Comparative Literature at Brown University, and the author of *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek Tragedy and philosophy*, which will be published earlier this year.

June Purvis is currently writing a book on the education of working-class women in nineteenth-century England.

Trevor J. Saunders is Professor of Greek at the University of Newcastle and currently Visiting Fellow at the Humanities Research Centre, Canberra. His revised and edited translation of Aristotle's *Politics* is published in the Penguin Classics series.

André Sorel's collection of stories, *Aleph*, appeared in 1983.

J. B. Spence is Professor of Politics at the University of Leicester, and co-editor of *British Politics in Perspective, 1983*. His book *South Africa in International Society* will be published next year.

Letters

Cultural Property

Sir, — Michael Dummett (July 25) writes eloquently in praise of patriotism — at least, of the form of patriotism which consists in loyalty to a land and its history, and to the bonds enshrined in a common culture. And, since great art can be conceived only as a part of such a culture, he feels entitled to his conclusion, that "only the Greeks have the right to claim the monuments of ancient Greece as peculiarly theirs".

British patriotism is presumably as legitimate as the Greek variety. And the system of royalties which has so far guaranteed our continuity should prompt us to be a little prouder of our "imperial" past than Professor Dummett seems to wish us to be. It was not through "political and military" power that we accumulated our treasures, but through the same spirit of enterprise and adventure that animated the ancient Greeks, and which caused our people to venture forth, frequently unprotected, in search of trade, or discovery, or a place where they might start life peacefully anew. They went, too, in the service of the Christian religion and the British Crown. But the "political and military power" which they enhanced thereby was as much the consequence of commerce as the cause of it. Not everything that they did in their travels was honest or commendable — any more than was everything done by the ancient Greeks, who accumulated such wealth and glory in their city states at home. But are we to dispossess ourselves of our history, for the sake of scruples which no rival culture has ever shared?

One visible record of our former greatness is the British Museum and its contents. Why is this not a "monument", an object of loyalty, affection and pride? And why do those feelings not establish, for us, a right of ownership in the achievements of our ancestors, of which this great accumulation is one? The Parthenon may have been made in Athens. But its principal ingredient, human labour, was brought from elsewhere — from those places which had the misfortune to lose out in the contest for mediterranean power, and whose people were often brought as slaves to the metropolises that had worsted them. Nevertheless, Dummett is quite right in thinking of this noble pile as a Greek creation, and one which naturally belongs on the acropolis of Athens.

Whatever we may feel about the Elgin Marbles, it is clear that these appeals to patriotic sentiment can have no power to settle the question of ownership. As Dummett's article illustrates, even meticulous philosophers can, when discussing art, ascribe rights of ownership in the most erratic way, and to things which do not and cannot possess them. Only persons have rights, and while the class of persons includes states, corporations and individuals, it is questionable whether it also includes such an entity as "The Greeks" (defined, incidentally, so as to include both the population of ancient Athens, and the citizens of the modern state). If ownership by the Greek State is to be justified by the "rights" of the Greek "people", then we ought to be a little clearer about the meaning of the word "people", and a little clearer about the claims of the Greek State to speak on behalf of those who are at present governed by it. It may not be true that Lord Elgin had the right to purchase the Marbles, or the Sublime Porte the right (of indeed the intention) to alienate them. But works of art are bought and sold, even works which enshrine the identity of a "people", as completely as the Marbles of the Parthenon. Are all such transactions illegitimate, and if so, does this mean that the greater an artist, and the more expressive of a time and culture, the less right does he have to sell the product of his labour? It would be a strange world that said so, and, whatever its virtues in the eyes of those who think in collectivist ways about the ownership of art, I doubt very much that real art would be produced in it.

ROGER SCRUTON.
642 Little Wymondley, A-1060 Vienna.

Sir, — An interesting precedent for the restitution of looted cultural property, so admirably documented by Robert Browning (July 25), is afforded by the United Nations' Peace Treaty

with Italy. Signed in 1947, it states, in Article 37, that Italy should "restore all works of art, religious objects, archives and objects of historical value belonging to Ethiopia or its nationals removed from Ethiopia to Italy since October 3, 1935", that is, the date of Mussolini's invasion.

Though a manuscript and two crowns looted from Ethiopia over half a century earlier by the British expedition of 1867-8 against Emperor Tewodros were subsequently returned, as Professor Browning rightly notes, the greater part of the booty remains in this country. It includes part of Tewodros's hair and the amulet he wore at the time of his suicide, as well as several remarkable processional crosses and some five hundred fine manuscripts, a number of them beautifully illustrated.

RICHARD PANKHURST.
22 Lawn Road, London NW3.

Aspects of Copyright

Sir, — It was a pleasure to hear from my friend Jon Silkin, albeit indirectly, about his "editorial impasse" (July 25). If he had written to me before, he need never have found himself in his present predicament. Since the precise nature of his impasse, however, will not be clear to your readers from his article, perhaps I may offer them a little more background?

Early in the 1970s, the late Harold Owen invited me to undertake a "complete" edition of his brother's poems. This took ten years and many thousands of dollars in transatlantic, transamerican air-fares between libraries holding Owen manuscripts; in hotel, photographing, photocopying, research assistant, and secretarial expenses. The result, *Wilfred Owen: The Complete Poems and Fragments* (1983) was heroically published by Chatto and Windus at an immense cost, which they could never hope to recover from the sale of that scholarly two-volume edition. To achieve a price that libraries — at least — could afford, its editor and the Owen family agreed to a substantial reduction in their respective, contractually agreed, rates of royalty. A year and a half later, Chatto published a cheap paperback edition that offered the student and the general reader all but seven of the (early) poems in the two-volume edition, plus twelve of the more important fragments. Editor and publisher hoped with this paperback to recover at least some of the costs of *The Complete Poems and Fragments*.

Enter, then, Mr Silkin with a Penguin edition of *Wilfred Owen: The Poems* (1985) that, without permission, reproduced five pages of copyright material from Day Lewis's 1963 edition, seven pages from the 1983 *Complete Poems and Fragments*, and three copyright photographs. Fifteen other poems that he printed incorporated a large number of variants — substantive as well as accidental — lifted from the latter. Chatto protested and Penguin, to their credit, apologized and withdrew the book.

One must ask, however, how an experienced editor and an experienced publisher could find themselves in such an "impasse" (to adopt Silkin's revealing euphemism)? I do not know. Did my "misunderstanding" friend (to adopt another of his euphemisms) believe that copyright extended, simply, for fifty years from an author's death? Seemingly not, since he also lifted five-and-a-half pages — without acknowledgment to copyright-holder or publisher — from Sassoon's *Siegfried's Journey*, and Sassoon died in 1967.

Silkin says that "Stallworthy seems to believe that what he has done has been done once and for all, and that his edition precludes further change". I cannot guess his authority for this statement when there has been no communication between us since I organized a poetry reading for him in America some years ago. No editor in his right mind could believe that his work "precludes further change".

To avoid the impasse in which Silkin finds himself, one must follow the example of Dominic Hibberd, whose edition of Owen's *War Poems and Others* (1973) Silkin does not mention. Perhaps this is not surprising, since it is so much better than his own and since Dr Hibberd was allowed to improve on Day Lewis's texts at something like seventy points. His secret? He respected the law of copyright and negotiated mutually acceptable terms with

the Owen Estate. And lest anyone reading Silkin's article should have assumed that the Trustees of the Owen Estate are also its beneficiaries, I must state emphatically that this is not so. The Trustees receive nothing for their labours. Hibberd is not a Trustee, but he and I receive payment, as editors, for our editorial work. The rest of the income from Owen's writings goes to the Owen family — except, of course, in the case of Silkin's edition.

For reasons that I hope will now be clear, Owen's Trustees and publishers see no need at present to authorize a new edition of the poems, making extensive use of copyright material, let alone one as incomplete, inaccurate and self-indulgent in its annotation as Silkin's. Anthologists and critics, however, applying to Chatto and Windus for permission to use texts (with new copyright variants) of familiar (and otherwise out-of-copyright) poems, will be charged an appropriate fraction of the standard copyright fee or, in some case, no fee at all. I cannot recall an instance of such an anthologist or critic being refused permission to introduce a variant that he or she had proposed.

Mr Silkin says that "editors build upon each other's work", and borrows that very from the introduction to *The Complete Poems and Fragments* in which I recorded my own grateful indebtedness to Siegfried Sassoon and Edith Sitwell, Edmund Blunden, Cecil Day Lewis and Dominic Hibberd. He will escape from other such impasses if, in the future, he remembers that "building" does not mean flouting the laws of copyright.

JON STALLWORTHY.
Long Farm, Elsfeld Road, Old Marston, Oxford.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens

Sir, — I cannot imagine where Edward Mendelson got his information about why the Art Commission of the City of New York disapproved of the installation of Augustus Saint-Gaudens's "Standing Lincoln" at Lincoln Center (Commentary, April 25), but clearly it was not by being present at the Commission's deliberations on it (our meetings are open to the public) or by interviewing any member of the Commission or its administrative staff at City Hall. Had he done so he would have seen that all three reasons for disallowance he attributes to the Commission are incorrect.

The Commission objected not to the sculpture but to the particular siting proposed for it — a siting which, after many hours of discussion, turned out to be non-negotiable on the part of the statue's private donor.

I feel that I can speak for the other Members of the Commission in resenting Mr Mendelson's implication, that because of some ante-diluvian modernist attitudes, the Art Commission is incapable of appreciating the qualities of Saint-Gaudens. To claim that the Commission "simply didn't like it" is a distortion of the truth.

JOHN WILLENBECHER.
Art Commission of the City of New York, City Hall, New York, New York 10007.

Jesus' Genealogy

Sir, — Edward Ullendorff (Letters, August 1) is of course right so far as he goes, but why does he omit Thamar (Tamar) in Saint Matthew, chapter 1, verse 3, and Rachab in verse 5, both "specifically and crucially mentioned"?

EDMUND LEACH.
11 West Green, Barrington, Cambridge.

'Two-Headed Monster'

Sir, — I'm surprised Tim Dooley in his review (August 1) of *Two-Headed Monster* thinks my poem about Mrs Thudcher is "untouched by any glance of irony". I begin by describing her habit when shaking hands on formal occasions of pulling her guests past her just as they start to speak. It's true that the irony is mostly directed at myself and the other guests, but I wouldn't want anyone to think the poem leaves her uncriticized.

C. B. COX.
20 Park Gates Drive, Chendle Hulme, Stockport.

British Library Lending Services

Sir, — I have been coming to London for many years to the British Library Reading Room. My work requires access to a wide range of mainly recent literature, British and foreign, including American, and until now the Reference Division has ensured provision at one and the same time of an unrivalled range of both books and periodicals. Lending from this collection will destroy a reference tool of world importance, drawing users from far and wide and turn it into just another big library with many gaps in its recent holdings. As U. M. McKean points out (Letters, July 25), cuts in library finance in Britain have forced other academic libraries to buy fewer and fewer foreign books, so they obviously need an inter-library loan service of the kind so ably performed until now by the British Library Lending Division using its own stock and that of other (non-BL) collections. But the demand for loans of foreign books will now increase at the very time when the BL is proposing to use for that purpose what may well be the only copies in the country, forgetting that there is bound to be matching demand for reference use of the same material.

Should the BL be lending potentially unique copies? It would seem to me dangerous to do so, if one remembers the archival function of the Reference Division and the fact that current reference material is the basis of the future's historical studies. On the other hand, if the BL knows of the existence of other copies of requested material outside the Reference Division, then surely they are the ones which should be lent.

It is not the place of a foreign visitor to say how British money should be spent, but it seems to me that, when one looks at the national picture of library provision in the UK, there is a very strong case for ensuring that the Reference Division does not have to suffer to maintain the BL's loan service; both are essential.

PIERANGIOLLO BERRETONI.
Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy.

Sir, — Is it significant in the correspondence about the new category of "lending material" to be created in the British Library that not a single scholar or writer has expressed approval? A quick, one-day, unprofessional random sample of readers revealed unanimous condemnation, which points to a weakness in the consultative machinery between the Library administration and users.

The British Library Advisory Committee certainly includes professors, librarians and even one illustrious representative of the media, Magnus Magnusson, but there is no direct representation for the day-to-day workings of the Library and few, if any committee members, are, to the best of my knowledge, regular users. The minutes of the Committee reveal that the revolutionary creation of a new lending category, striking at the intrinsic identity of the Library, did come before its members and met with one or two very weak murmurs of disapproval. After eight years serving on the Committee myself I formed the opinion that there was a danger of the Committee becoming a rubber stamp for certain decisions which had already been taken.

I fully appreciate the need to meet inflation by enlarging revenue, but should it be without effective consultation when it challenges the whole basis on which the Library works? In the past, several surveys of readers' identity, profession and preferences have been carried out. Is there still time for a referendum on the beginnings of a fundamental change which would bring Panizzi hurrying back from his grave?

VINCENT BROME.
45 Great Ormond Street, London WC1.

The British National Bibliography Research Fund is sponsoring a one-day seminar on electronic transmission standards for the book world, to be held on Wednesday, October 15 at the Royal Over-Seas League in London. Details are available from Derek Greenwood, British Library Research and Development Department, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH.

COMMENTARY

English airs

Winton Dean

HENRY PURCELL
King Arthur
G.F. HANDELI
Ariadante
Buxton Festival

One of many pleasing features of the Buxton Festival is that it propounds a theme round which most events are grouped. This year's was King Arthur. In operative terms – Buxton possesses its own delightful Opera House – the Dryden-Purcell seniore opera of 1691 was a natural first choice; the second was Handel's *Ariadante*, remotely connected to the theme through its source in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and a masterpiece in its own right. Unfortunately both works employ a chorus and dancers, two departments in which Buxton, no doubt for good economic reasons, is not strong, and in addition *King Arthur* requires a double cast of singers and actors, not to mention spectacular scenery.

All English semioperas fall between two stools, since the principal characters are not required to sing. *King Arthur* is especially problematic owing to the ambivalence of Dryden's political allegory, which suffered a radical change of direction between conception and performance. It is difficult to tell when he is being ironical, or how much this mattered to Purcell. The music is always intensely dramatic, though its links with the main action are often tenuous. It is true that the spirits Philidel and Grimbald, as befits descendants of Ariel and Caliban, sing as well as speak, and when they do they propel the plot towards true opera. But this only occurs once or twice. While Purcell rises splendidly to the patriotic scenes and is always at home with the pastoral, especially when tinged with sensuality, he is mostly concerned to evoke the magic background, a world of fantasy and illusion, which he does with marvellous eloquence.

Since *King Arthur* lives by the music, Malcolm Fraser was right to concentrate on it and take a knife to the dialogue; to do full justice to both would have entailed heavy expense in time and resources. The action, played behind a gauze with a huge portrait of Merlin that never quite disappeared, was agreeable to the eye despite an intermittent suggestion of maimed rites. Fay Conway designed an attractive backcloth for the "Fairest Isle"; Terry Gilbert's choreography suited the pastoral episodes better than the more solemn moments. The celebrated frost scene, with the finest music in the score, was allowed to degenerate prematurely into comedy; Cupid mocks the Cold Genius, but his music should freeze us first. Anthony Hise let the pace sag here, as he did also in "Fairest Isle", but otherwise his direction of the Manchester Camera was crisp and lively. The small group of singers, doubling as soloists, chorus and sometimes dancers, acquitted themselves well, especially Eileen Hulse (a pure-toned Cupid), Steven Page (Cold Genius) and Barry Banks (in most of the tenor songs). Alan Bates and Lucy Gutteridge made the most of what remained of Dryden's dialogue.

If the production of *King Arthur* was aimed in the right direction, that of *Ariadante* was not. The besetting sin of producers of Handel's operas is a refusal to trust the music or the dramatic genius of the composer or the intelligence of the listener. The plot of *Ariadante* is so straightforward, its design so varied, and its characters so vividly realized that no concessions are needed for an audience unfamiliar with the convention. Even the omission of chorus and ballet, essential as they are to a complete realization, need not bring the opera to the ground. Ian Judge, the producer, seemed determined at all costs to undercut the music. He began with an appeal for a cheap laugh by having Ginevra strip and take a bubble bath, watched by a lustful Polinesso, during her first aria (addressed to her mirror in the presence only of her maid Dalinda). After that it was no surprise to see two horn players in evening dress stroll on with their music for the King's first aria and Ariodante swigging wine during the ritornellos of the next; any-

thing, it seemed, to tickle the eye at the expense of the ear. Worse followed in the great deception scene of Act Two, where Polinesso arranges for Dalinda, dressed in her mistress's clothes, to admit him to Ginevra's apartment, watched by Ariodante. Ginevra's betrothed, Polinesso and Dalinda were to be seen coupling on an outside bed throughout two arias, one of them Ariodante's superb lament "Scherza infida". This, like the parallel incident in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, is an open-air scene in a garden; to introduce the bed judge had to tinker with the plot, as he did repeatedly, always to his disadvantage, throughout the evening. Yet he muffed every one of the striking dramatic opportunities offered by the score, from the surprise of the King's first entry to Ginevra's final rescue from prison. A singularly unhelpful set suited none of the locations in which the action takes place.

The efforts of a respectable cast were largely frustrated, even when they were not impeded by the grotesque acrobatics which they were required to execute (unless they happened to be lying full length) while singing their arias. James Bowman, a superb Polinesso in voice and action, emerged comparatively unscathed. Eirian James made much of Ariodante's brilliant music, but in her last aria rushed about as if training for the Commonwealth Games and acclaiming one of Liner's goals in Mexico City. Rosa Mannion missed the full flavour of Ginevra's part; her promising soprano developed a hard edge in the higher register which might have been less obtrusive had she been allowed to keep still. Meryl Drower (Dalinda) and Christopher Gillett (Lurcanio) clearly knew what their music was about; their beautiful duet in Act Three was one of the few moments in which it was permitted to speak without interference. The orchestra again played well, and Anthony Hise's tempos were nicely judged; but whatever induced him to revive the bad old habit of delaying all recitative cadences?

The score was brutally cut. The decision to play the ballet music between the acts added insult to injury. Inevitably it was drowned by the chatter of the audience, and it extended the intervals to little short of an hour. There would have been ample time to restore some of the dozen emasculated arias; three others, at least one of them crucial, were cut. This was an opportunity sadly missed. It could only confirm the philistine belief that Handel's operas are so many joints to be carved up ad lib. They are fully integrated musical dramas, and unless they are approached with a corresponding degree of integrity there is little point in performing them at all.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 290

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than September 5. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct – in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author, Author 290" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on September 12.

1 I saw my Meg come 'linkin o'er the lee;
I saw my Meg, but Meggy no saw me;
For yet the sun was wading thro' the mist,
And she was coss upon me ere she wist;
Her coats were kiltil, and did sweetly shew
Her straight bare legs that whiter were than snow;
Her cockerony snooded up fou sleek,
Her haffet-locks hang waving on her cheek;
Her cheek sae ruddy, and her een sae clear;
And O! Her mouth's like ony hinnie pear.

2 Meg grabbed her hat and set out for Windmill, the
Cowgate slowly uncreeping its tug, up in Royal Mile
the torries were lopping over the calanys, Paddy
Paddy littering its doors with weans, snuffly and
ragged, kites off to school, scrawling dirty things on
the pavement, some throwing filth and checking a
lassie... She'd get out of this place, get a lodging
somewhere in Tangleha' or the Ecclesgreig.

3 Meg, in the meanwhile, went off to a great black
cauldron that was boiling on a fire on the floor, and
lifting the lid, an odour was diffused through the

Scotch philosophers

Peter France

A Hotbed of Genius: The Scottish
Enlightenment 1730-1790
National Museums of Scotland, Queen Street,
Edinburgh, until September 30

"Here I stand at what is called the Cross of Edinburgh and can, in a few minutes, take fifty men of genius and learning by the hand." People have been quoting this gratifying remark of an English scholar visiting eighteenth-century Edinburgh for so long that it is surprising to recall that the concept of a Scottish Enlightenment is a relatively new one. It has flourished over the last two decades, however, and this year sees it triumph in its old centre, Edinburgh. Not only is it a main theme of this year's Festival; it is also being copiously celebrated by the University of Edinburgh's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities – so copiously indeed that there is some danger of overkill. A large programme of lectures and seminars culminates in four concurrent conferences at the end of August. Meanwhile, a major exhibition, *A Hotbed of Genius*, sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland, is showing at the Queen Street building of the National Museums of Scotland. The same title is used for an accompanying book, edited by David Daiches, Peter Jones and Jean Jones (160pp, with 37 colour and 146 black-and-white illustrations. University of Edinburgh Press. Paperback, £10.95. 0 85224 537 8); although this splendidly illustrated volume shares the same emphases as the exhibition and uses much of the same material, it is not just a catalogue, but a set of six well-informed essays which give a valuable introduction to the main ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment.

For the organizers of an exhibition, it is a problem that the Enlightenment is a movement of ideas – books, papers, prints and above all talk. An original solution has been found, using new technology in a way that would have appealed to the men who produced the first *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The first part of the exhibition, designed by John L. Paterson, is an attempt at recreating the atmosphere of eighteenth-century intellectual Edinburgh. Equipped with a light-weight headset, the visitor penetrates into dimly lit cellars, filled with reproductions of old documents, soft sculptures of philosophers and drinkers and enlarged negatives of prints of the Modern Athens, luridly displayed by tungsten-halogen ultraviolet lighting. As one moves from room to room, the headset picks up modulated light signals and converts them into a series of five-minute scripts. These are composed of com-

mentary, dialogue, song and assorted sound effects – the essential thing being the dialogue, which uses the printed words of David Hume, Adam Smith, Joseph Black and James Hutton to convey their theories on (respectively) causation, division of labour and free trade, latent heat and the theory of the earth. It sounds a tall order, but to judge from the very favourable comments of visitors, the show is pitched at the right level. It is essentially educational, but it does its teaching (as its subjects would have wished) with a fair degree of naturalness and humour, using a visit of Franklin to Edinburgh to link the different sections and bringing out, as a purely visual exhibition could not, the conviviality of club and tavern and the fact that however it looks in print, this was Enlightenment with a Scottish accent.

The upstairs rooms contain the real meat of the exhibition, a more familiar mix of objects, pictures and print, again concentrating on Hume, Smith, Black and Hutton. Hutton's geology lends itself best of all to visual presentation. Here is a boulder from Glen Tilt, the place that allowed Hutton to verify his theories about granite, and photographs and prints of the "unconformities" at Jedburgh, Siccar Point and Salisbury Crags which gave credence to the immense new time-scale he proposed for the history of the earth. Few of the other exhibits can match these for excitement, but taken together they form a most interesting (and admirably annotated) collection, ranging from a board showing pins at different stages of manufacture (a brilliant illustration of the famous chapter in the *Wealth of Nations*) to the beautiful letter from Black to Smith on Hume's death. Solemnity is properly kept at bay by a liberal sprinkling of John Kay's caricatures. There are sections devoted to art and culture (not the most original aspect of the Scottish Enlightenment) and to new developments in agriculture, industry and commerce, but in the centre of the stage are the great philosophers, doctors, lawyers and scientists. It all seems – as indeed it was – very much a men-only affair; is it a sign of our further enlightenment that it is a woman, Jean Jones, who was the guiding spirit behind the whole exhibition?

In the past, some have seen the "Scotch philosophers" as dull dogs. *A Hotbed of Genius* (book and exhibition alike) conveys, on the contrary, an evident sense of admiration for these inventive, progressive yet moderate men, dedicated to improving the life of their society. The authors may exaggerate – as is normal in such a presentation – the centrality of the Scots in the vast European movement of Enlightenment. What is more, compared with some of their Continental counterparts, the literati of Edinburgh sometimes seem a bit too sensible and comfortable. Even so, one can hardly fail to come away from this exhibition greatly impressed, both by the intellectual energy of this hotbed of genius, and by the skill with which it has been presented.



Joseph Black by John Kay, 1787, from the exhibition reviewed here.

A congregation of solitaires

Barbara Everett

T.S. ELIOT
The Cocktail Party
Phoenix Theatre

The newly founded New Theatre Company, committed to bringing serious drama back to the West End, has opened at the Phoenix with T.S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*. Since this is only the second of the play's London productions in the nearly forty years since it first appeared, the occasion is something of an event on both counts.

John Dexter has directed with what seems a firm intention to make of the play a drama for the 1980s. Eliot's other masterpiece *Cats* (advertised on the programme's endpaper) could almost have suggested itself as a model. For this *Cocktail Party* is vivid, warm, showy, noisy and a little empty. It even has music, not the music of poetry but strong, sweet and pervasive accompaniment from onstage and offstage pianos. The sets won applause on the first night: Twenties designs of immense claustrophobic stridency, transforming to (Thirties) white, with bowls of lilies, for the third-act finale – an effect of Syrie Maugham crossed by an Annunciation. The visual impact is complicated by the fact that the company, looking vulnerable, have to keep their end up while wearing the post-war New Look.

There is plenty in the production to provoke the mind by filling the eye. If, as often in the theatre of the 1980s, the sets threaten to crush the characters, this conception of the characters fights back by being fairly external too. John Dexter has brought the play up to date by everywhere humanizing, socially de-classing, eroticizing. The participants in what was conceived as a comedy of manners have become broader and cruder, have softened and blurred. This is particularly striking in the case of the three women. Lavinia is no longer a middle-aged middle-class battle-axe, nor Julia a well-off nuisance, nor Celia an aristocratic arrogant young idealist. Sheila Allen renders

the first into a Bayswater beauty, Rachel Kempson dithers through the second as a dotty old dear, and – most surprisingly – Sheila Gish finds in Celia a friendly West End troupier. More geared to detachment and formality, the men still seem to be acting (well) in a different play altogether. Simon Ward's Edward has a nice humour and poise, but in shedding his character's cold barristerial blankness he deprives Lavinia of any reason for leaving him. The callow Peter, Celia's romantic young counterpart (Lavinia's ex-lover, as Celia is Edward's) is endowed by Stephen Boxer with some almost too fine delicacies of feeling. Robert Eddison brings exquisite elderly intonations of goodness to the debonair, vaguely Foreign Office Alex. And Alec McCowan's psychiatrist, the great Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, not merely departs from the Guinness-Harrison interpretations of this enigma, but simply abandons the notion of the character as enigmatic at all. His Reilly is a totally new and studied portrayal: an extrovert, barking, manic, highly "distinguished" doctor, sworn to save his patients even if he kills them in the process: a funny, sinister, momentarily brilliant (if embarrassing) Cocktail-Party-piece.

Does it matter that the evening's central performance is so thoroughly Shavian? I think it must, given that Shaw's studies of men of power are so much better than this. And given, even more, that Eliot too has his own idiosyncratic and strangely impressive quality as a dramatist, to which attention is hardly being paid in this production. *The Cocktail Party*, called in the programme Eliot's "most famous comedy", and sometimes now referred to as a "classic", lacks (to my mind) the intensity of *Sweeney*, the power of *The Family Reunion*, even the dry sweetness of the unpopular *Confidential Clerk*. Here and there chirily or fumblingly or merely didactic, *The Cocktail Party* is, however, preserved by a peculiar integrity of mind, intelligence and wit. It is a penetrating moral irony, above all on the subject of love, that gives Eliot as a dramatist his light yet steely resilience. Never acquiring the true dramatic gift that unites dramatists from Eur-

pides to Rattigan, the vision of human lives necessarily interacting, Eliot none the less found something like dramatic action for his congregations of solitaires by holding on to this integrity. The predecessor of *The Cocktail Party* was *The Family Reunion*, written at the end of the 1930s in a context of cosy fictions of homecomings, and under the shadow of coming war. And its action derives from its hero's moral decision to reverse his family's hard will-to-reunion, and to convert mere homecoming to *diaspora* and pilgrimage. *The Confidential Clerk* would in the early 1950s follow *The Cocktail Party* with a curiously similar story of a young man rejecting a matrix of moneyed security for a future based in the home of a humble North London nobody. Thus, a play almost self-parodyingly cast as West End Comedy points outwards to the unsmart suburbs as its centre of human good.

The Cocktail Party has the same tough moral irony. It may be observed that Dexter's production of this comedy of manners unfortunately lacks – in fact – manners. Edward and Lavinia in turn see off their guests (who happen to be elderly) sitting down, with back turned. At the cocktail party men quickly tear off black ties. But Eliot's play works precisely in terms of a world in which men are tied down by more than merely ties: a social world that is, in the end, all conventions, all surfaces, all manners meaning nothing. Society is bound by love, yet love is here illusion. Only when they perceive, and perceiving can embrace, the violence and void beneath the surface of their own "social" characters can the strangers who meet as guests advance to a love that is not illusion: to kindness, human service, vision of God or just cocktail party. Proclaiming "Honesty before honour", Reilly, Julia and Alex – the three peculiarly social angels – drink their libation to the Death of the Heart. This hard-edged, instructive, sometimes splendidly funny moral irony is not everybody's choice for an evening at the theatre. But it is an inimitable one, and in failing to provide it Dexter's strong and successful production carries within itself a sense of betrayal.

Accelerating the decline

Brian Lee

EUGENE O'NEILL
Long Day's Journey Into Night
Theatre Royal Haymarket

Eugene O'Neill's great faults are well known. They have been thoroughly rehearsed both in stage performances and in academic analysis. For a start he wrote very badly, his prose alternating between a grinding, repetitive realism in which the banal particularities of American life are tediously amassed, and an overblown poetic style heavily freighted with portentous symbolism and meaningful imagery. Sometimes, as in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, he even contrived to combine both these modes in one play. Secondly, he had, by all orthodox standards, a deficient sense of dramatic structure. His efforts to marry linearity to circularity usually ended in a sort of geometric anarchy, marooning characters and audience alike in the dense, amorphous fog which fittingly encompasses the action of this, his masterpiece. And as if these weaknesses were not enough to damn him, he is also charged with not being able to think very clearly about the political and philosophical issues around which his plays revolve. Is *Long Day's Journey Into Night* to be read as a commentary on the failure of the American Dream and the alienation of the bourgeois family? Or should it be viewed as metaphysical speculation about the nature of reality in which the four main characters practise various forms of transcendence or evasion? Both themes are present, of course, but they are denied any satisfactory elaboration by O'Neill's determined fidelity to autobiographical exactitude.

Jonathan Miller's new production of the play, transferred to London after a successful run on Broadway, appears to have been shaped by an awareness of these faults. But in

his efforts to eliminate, or at least minimize them, the director has unfortunately also sacrificed the elusive element that should make its performance a powerful and moving experience.

Once, when he was requested to abridge a text in order to make it fit the demands of a theatre's timetable, O'Neill flatly refused on the grounds that his plays weren't written with commuters in mind. Miller, on the other hand, has obligingly cut the play's running time from four hours to three. This is achieved by an adroit use of overlapping dialogue delivered at breakneck speed; and though this does have the effect of immuring the individual members of the Tyrone family in their cocoons of reminiscence and self-pity and thus adds to the play's atmosphere of overwhelming personal isolation, it also serves to lose some of O'Neill's more important lines. Mary Tyrone's crucial speech, for example, which comes as close as anything to summarizing the play's theme, is delivered as just another part of her continuous, disregarded gabble:

None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self for ever.

In compressing and accelerating the action of the play, Miller also distorts its overall tempo, so that one initially has the feeling of a family being swept into a netherworld rather than of moving inexorably into the blackness of reality in which the four main characters practise various forms of transcendence or evasion? Both themes are present, of course, but they are denied any satisfactory elaboration by O'Neill's determined fidelity to autobiographical exactitude.

Jonathan Miller's new production of the play, transferred to London after a successful run on Broadway, appears to have been shaped by an awareness of these faults. But in

brotherly hatred. Bethel Leslie too, as Mary Tyrone, works hard in the second half of the play to overcome the effects of its frenetic opening. When she finally escapes from her intolerable situation into a morphine-induced reverie of girlish innocence and chastity, her cold detachment from the real world creates a moving image of the terrors of drug addiction.

In the midst of all this, though, James Tyrone, the failed tragedian whose early sufferings as an Irish immigrant have blighted his subsequent career, can only stand in a vacuum of bewildered incomprehension. Jack Lemmon is a fine actor who has, particularly in the films he made with Billy Wilder, created the definitive model of a certain type of contemporary, urban neurotic. The part of James Tyrone, however, demands a mixture of petty vanity and egomaniacal grandeur that even Olivier and Richardson found difficult to embrace, and which is quite beyond Jack Lemmon's compass. He manages the smaller gestures very well indeed, but without the larger, shadowy aspiration, even the illusion of tragic nobility cannot be sustained and the character loses all authority. *Long Day's Journey Into Night* was written, O'Neill tells us, in blood as well as in tears. Lemmon's performance is good enough to make one weep, but that other vital element remains sadly lacking.

Recently published plays include *Funerals and Commitments* by Dusky Hughes (176pp. Faber. Paperback, £4.95. 0 571 13778 7), *Double Cross* by Thomas Kilroy (79pp. Faber. Paperback, £4.50. 0 571 14660 0), Charles Péguy's *The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc*, adapted by Jean-Paul Lupat, translated by Jeffrey Wainwright (92pp. P.N. Review/Carcanet. Paperback, £5.95. 0 85635 690 5), *The Brue Robert, King o' Scots* by R. S. Silver (63pp. Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, £3.50. 0 85411 035 6).

COMMENTARY

Timepiece

Isabel Fonseca

ARTHUR MILLER
The American Clock
Cottesloe Theatre

The Depression more than anything else shaped Arthur Miller as a writer and a thinker, and in *The American Clock* he has made it the subject of a play. Inspired by Studs Terkel's *Hard Times* and incorporating autobiographical material (Miller's father lost his business in the Depression), *The American Clock* is an unexpectedly buoyant production, full of song and dance.

The main story-line charts the ruin of a well-off New York Jewish family like Miller's own. Through the stunned eyes of the family – and of the nation – Miller examines the unprecedented (and indeed "un-American") phenomenon of complete reliance on government, and again expresses his alarm, in wonderful Brooklynesque, over the threat to individual freedom. (The relationship between Governments and individuals is a vital theme for Miller, as is shown by his appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1956, and more recently, by his work with PEN, on behalf of writers in prison.)

For all its personal elements, *The American Clock* more than any other Miller play aims to embrace America: urban, rural, radical and reactionary, black and white. "The main thing about the Depression", Isaac, the black proprietor of a Mississippi diner phlegmatically observes, "is that it finally hit the white people, 'cause us folks never had nothin' else."

The confusion of the time is expressed by the immigrant grandfather who vacillates between wishing Roosevelt would be king and wanting to send his grandson to Russia to get a new start (that is until he learns about state ownership: "The stores they own? Them bastards!") The title itself, which could refer to any of three time zones, suggests America's endemic lack of synchronicity.

Confusion is also registered in the loose construction of the play (Miller has called it a "mosaic"). In its ambitious scope – spanning the years from 1929 to 1969 – and in its fifty characters, masterfully handled by a cast of twenty. But unfortunately, the size of things, and the incessant singing diffuse the tension of the piece. It is either too noisy and crowded to be moving, or too enjoyable to be true to the subject-matter (and by the end a certain nostalgia for the Depression has been generated).

The episodic structure favours brilliance over stillness, and yet the communication of strong feeling demands something of the latter. David Schofield makes of the brevity of his four roles the virtue of immediate impact. His brilliance, like that of many of the others, is properly superficial. This points to a difficulty in Miller's "mosaic" approach. In a short scene (and especially one which draws on documentary sources), one's emotional response depends on pre-existent feelings. In other words, of course we all feel sorry for the broke and broken farmer and young men starving or driven to suicide. But such feelings do not depend on the telling, and our sympathies are not altered or enlarged.

Miller maintains his interest in time remembered as dramatized through the consciousness of one or two choric narrators. But in *The American Clock*, the tension is so low and scattered that this device for keeping the past alive seems laced, mechanical. If the dramatic centre of the play is in memory, it would have been useful to draw out the peripheral characters and so illustrate political values, not only through documentary, but through some shred of human development. Rose, the mother, is the only part that affords this chance and in that role Sara Kestelman demonstrates her own, and Miller's proven skill in several moving scenes.

The American Clock is not about the impact of the Depression on particular people, but neither is it squarely an "issue" play, like *The Crucible*, with its oblique attack on McCarthyism – and so, with no certain target it just ticks along without immanent danger of exploding.

The triumph of Trivia

Francis Haskell

JOHN A. PINTO
The Trevi Fountain
323pp. Yale University Press. £25.
0 3000 3335 4

The Trevi Fountain has some claim to be considered the most popular eighteenth-century monument in the world. Yet when it was begun (in its present form) in 1732, connoisseurs in London, Paris and elsewhere were wholly convinced that architecture in Rome (and indeed in Italy as a whole) had not only come to an end, but had been off course for several generations – corrupted by just those great masters of the Baroque to whom Nicola Salvi, its designer, was to turn for inspiration. The fountain in fact is only one of a whole series of masterpieces – chief among them the Spanish Steps – which transformed the appearance of Rome in the early and middle decades of the eighteenth century and made the city once again pre-eminent among European capitals. The apparent sudden development of great art can never be adequately explained, but this last "Roman Renaissance" is the most challenging of them all: by every rational test that one can think of it had no right to exist – and the experts have accordingly punished it for its impertinence ever since.

Those men of taste who flocked to Italy during the second half of the eighteenth century and laid down the criteria by which the monuments of Rome were to be judged, treated it with condescension – at best; and although serious attention has long been paid to the achievements of Bernini, Borromini and Pietro da Cortona, the founding fathers of Roman Baroque architecture, eighteenth-century developments in the city have still been little studied. John A. Pinto's excellent monograph on the Trevi Fountain is thus very welcome.

The fascination of the study lies indeed not only in what is said about the fountain as it now is, but also in the discussion of what it replaced. Pinto is able to demonstrate that for all the unexpected thrill with which one suddenly comes across this huge marble fantasy almost hidden away behind the Corso, many of its most significant features were predetermined by conditions dating back over decades and even centuries. The source of the Aqua Virgo – a particularly fresh and clean spring – was discovered in 19 BC at Salone, a few miles outside Rome. Credit was given to a young maiden who was said to have pointed it out to the soldiers of Agrippa; by the seventeenth century a name – Trivia! – had been found for her, and in 1762 her powers of observation were commemorated in a pretty bas-relief inserted into the façade of the fountain. The water supply was to be used for the low-lying Campus

Martius, whose large-scale redevelopment was undertaken during the reign of Augustus after the area had been neglected during the period of the Republic. To a notable extent therefore the site of the fountain was already fore-ordained in antiquity, though in fact when the aqueduct was first constructed, the Aqua Virgo terminated rather nearer to the Pantheon than to its present position. As the source of the spring was only twenty-four metres above sea level, the rate of fall was necessarily low, and this radically affected the appearance of all the many fountains built for, or designed to beautify, the outlet of this extremely important supply of fresh water.

Pinto's analysis of these designs constitutes the main feature of this book. Many of the greatest Italian architects were involved in successive projects – Alberti, Bernini, Fuga and Vanvitelli among them – but difficulties of all kinds stood in the way of satisfactory completion, and the fountain remained disappointingly unimpressive long after Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers in the Piazza Navona was enthralled visitors to Rome. Nevertheless, Pinto's account of these early failures makes a most important and fascinating contribution to the history of town planning and social life in the city.

In the first years of the eighteenth century the problem of what could be done to the fountain began to attract serious attention, and from then on Pinto is able to illustrate and

discuss a great number of designs. One feature turns up again and again: the incorporation into the structure of the Antonine Column (fifteen metres in height) which had been discovered in 1703. Though architects of the stature of Juvarena toyed with the notion (and Carlo Fontana had the similar idea of making use of an obelisk), the results, had they been carried out, would surely have been most unhappy: in all the existing drawings towering verticals seem to rise indifferent to, and detached from, the water flowing into basins so far below their bases. The effects (on paper) resemble what can only be called dehydrated versions of Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers, which naturally haunted the imaginations of subsequent architects. Some designers did conceive of a horizontal wall fountain, but the private building interests of the princely families of Rome usually stood in the way of anything on the impressive scale desired. Indeed, the construction between 1728 and 1730 of a new façade for the Palazzo Poli, dominating the Piazza di Trevi, seemed likely to confine any new fountain to no wider a surface than that occupied by the existing, unsatisfactory structure, for this now became hemmed in by the two bays of the palace. However, as so often in Rome, the rivalries of successive popes played a decisive part in transforming what appeared to be an insoluble problem. In 1732 Clement XII (Corsini), only too pleased to be able to thwart the ostentatious ambitions of his prede-

cessors and their favourites, authorized the cloaking of the whole façade by the new twin that he had in mind. Thus luck played its part in promoting the brilliant wall design suggested by Nicola Salvi, who won the competition for a replacement for the undistinguished structure that had been in place for nearly a hundred years.

Salvi enjoyed no fame or powerful protection at the time, and unfortunately we know very little indeed of the circumstances behind his victory. The names of only a few of the competitors are recorded, and above all we know nothing of the judges or of how they reached their decision. Even Pinto's meticulous researches have not been able to reveal much, and this important gap in what is otherwise a well-documented and very well-told story is the only real disappointment in his book – for him, presumably, as much as for us. But, in the light of Salvi's plans (which continued to be carried out faithfully enough even after his death) we can only applaud the taste which was probably superior to that to be found anywhere else in Europe at the time. The extended horizontal façade which (literally) covers the whole of the recently completed façade of Palazzo Poli and the almost arrogant projection of the sculptural decoration deep into the miniature piazza have the effect of making the huge figure of Oceanus, who dominates his entourage of Tritons and marine horses, fit perfectly into the structure as a whole – despite the fact that he is nineteen feet high (taller than the Quirinal Horse Tamers). Moreover the cascades of water which rush and roar over the platform of boulders and rocks into the wide basin below triumphantly avoid the monotony potentially posed by the low fall which seems to have been inherent in the projects of almost all earlier architects, including those of the highest distinction.

Salvi himself was not, of course, an architect of the greatest intellect or imagination (his "programme" for the fountain is distinctly prolix and pedantic) – nor were all the sculptors working for him of outstanding originality – and Pinto can provide convincing precedents for most of the features we enjoy in the fountain. Yet the Fontana di Trevi provides a supreme example of something that professional art historians often forget: the genuine creative value of intelligent eclecticism deployed within a rich tradition; and, in any case, part of its charm comes from that very confusion of styles ("Baroque", "Rococo", "Neo-classicism") and of opposing principles (reason and fantasy) which has worried so many scholars, including Pinto, anxious to "place" the work within the accepted categories of eighteenth-century developments. This well-produced and well-illustrated book is thus able to throw important light on a very great deal more than is indicated in its title.



A Triton of the Trevi Fountain, a detail from a photograph in the book reviewed here.

Constructive suggestions

J. B. Bury

PIETRO CATANEO, GIACOMO BAROZZI DA VIGNOLA, ALVISE CORNARO, FRANCESCO GIORGI, CLAUDIO TOLOMEI, GIANGIORGIO TRISSINO and GIORGIO VASARI
Scritti di architettura
Edited by Elena Bassi, Maria Walcher Casotti and others
387pp. Milan: Polifilo. L.140,000.

Over the past thirty years the celebrated architectural treatises of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, essential reference works for students of Renaissance and Baroque architecture, have become increasingly hard to find. Although reprint firms, notably Gregg International and Benjamin Blom, of New York, in the 1960s, and more recently Arnoldo Forni, of Bologna, have issued facsimiles of a number of titles, including Casarino's *Vitruvius* and the treatises of Serlio, Pietro Cataneo, Palladio, Philibert Delorme, Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau and Scamozzi, they have failed in most cases to provide even the briefest introduction, let alone a bibliography, notes or an index. Ediciones Albatros, of Valencia, and Edi-

zioni Il Polifilo, of Milan, have approached the task in a more serious manner. Albatros has issued good quality facsimiles of Spanish sixteenth and seventeenth century architectural books with excellent introductions by leading scholars. Il Polifilo have gone further, completely reprinting the texts and providing a full critical apparatus of notes, bibliographies and indexes as well as scholarly introductions.

The book under review is the latest of Il Polifilo's Trattati di Architettura series. The earlier volumes are L. B. Alberti's *De re aedificatoria* (in the original Latin with a new literal Italian translation superseding Bartoli's of 1550), the treatises of Filarete, Francesco di Giorgio, Palladio and Guarini, and a volume of writings on architecture and proportion by Francesco Colonna, Luca Pacioli and Leonardo da Vinci; as well as reprints of Casarino's *Vitruvius* and Domenico Fontana's *Trasportazione dell'obelisco e le fabbriche di Sisto V.* All these works have been admirably edited by Italian scholars of international reputation, handsomely printed and well produced.

The latest volume, mainly devoted to the treatises of Vignola and Pietro Cataneo, and with forty-six plates, maintains the high standard set by its predecessors. The editor of the

former treatise, Maria Walcher Casotti, has happily chosen to reprint the *editio princeps* (1562) of the famous *Cinque ordini* in its first state, of which only two copies survive. In addition to her introduction she has provided a valuable bibliographical article which incorporates an astonishing list of 514 editions of the *Cinque ordini* printed between 1562 and 1974.

The Pietro Cataneo text chosen by its editor, Elena Bassi, for reproduction is that of the second edition (1567). This is understandable since the first edition (1554), of four books, was considerably amended by Cataneo, and a further four books were added. Nevertheless it is a pity that the several passages occurring in the first edition but omitted from the second have only been briefly summarized in the notes.

Cataneo's *Architettura* is remarkable in the history of architectural treatises for being one of the first of a new "universal" genre covering both civil and military architecture. Palladio tells us in his *Quattro libri* (1570) that he intended to write on military architecture, but in the event failed to do so. As a consequence Cataneo's only "universal" successor was Vincenzo Scamozzi, whose *Architettura*, mainly written in the 1590s, came out in 1615. As is well known, the second half of the sixteenth century witnessed the divergence along

separate paths of the professions of civil architect and military engineer, previously often performed by a single individual with impressive versatility. Yet it was paradoxically in that same period that the fashion briefly prevailed for treatises which aimed to characterize fortification as a branch of "universal" architecture. Instead of as a branch of applied science. This ambitious effort, pioneered in Italy by Cataneo, to combine together within one discipline two ultimately incompatible subjects, was not effectively discontinued until the seventeenth century.

Cataneo's *Architettura* did not achieve the popularity of the great civil architectural treatises of Serlio, Palladio or Scamozzi; nor of such treatises on fortification as those of Girolamo Cataneo, Errard de Bar-le-duc, or Antoine de Ville. After the 1567 edition it was not, as Professor Bassi reminds us, printed again. But she might have added that it was not forgotten, being often referred to, and praised, both inside and outside Italy.

Edizioni Il Polifilo and the scholars who have edited Vignola, Cataneo and the other texts deserve the highest praise for a publication which, together with its predecessors, should be in the library of every architectural historian who can afford them.

Problems chiefly descriptive

P. N. Furbank

DANIELE DEL GIUDICE
Atlante occidentale
152pp. Turin: Einaudi. L.16,000.
8806 58222 4

There have been novels, by Italo Calvino and others, about the problem of narration, and it was as such that Calvino praised Daniele del Giudice's first novel, *Lo studio di Wimbledon*. So why not a novel about description? For it is a profound puzzle what one means by the term "description". The only things that spring to mind as ingredients of a description are enumeration and comparison (all adjectives belong to one or the other). But enumeration in some contexts figures as almost the opposite of a description ("I didn't ask you for an enumeration. I asked you for a description"), or on the other hand comparison, or saying what the thing to be described is "like", but this raises the spectre of infinite regression. (If the way to describe A is to say it is like B, and the way to describe B is to say it is like C, description appears to be an endless series of postponements.)

Del Giudice's *Atlante occidentale* (Atlas of the West) turns precisely on this issue. It runs somewhat thus. Brahe, a young Italian physicist, who is at work on a front-line experiment in fundamental physics at the great proton accelerator near Geneva (a ring-like underground structure thirty kilometres in length), casually encounters Ira Epstein, a middle-aged German novelist, through their common hobby of aviation. Epstein, who is currently a candidate for the Nobel prize, is conducting an experiment also. He believes himself to have explored all available forms of writing, and always with one aim in mind: that writing and telling stories should become totally "transparent" to him, even in the act of writing. This

meanwhile he feels he has now achieved, which means that it is time for him to stop writing. From now on he means to "see" stories (in some sort of instantaneous and non-narrative manner) and simultaneously to give up "life", of which he has lived enough, in favour of "the present".

Epstein engineers a friendship with Brahe, the course of which constitutes the experiment, or alternatively the story, of the present novel, and the basis of which is a curious sympathy they discover in their way of attending to the world. What Brahe first finds impressive and attractive in Epstein is his special rapport with objects, for instance his extraordinary deftness in unstopping a beer-bottle; and later Epstein explains that a proper kind of attention to mass-produced objects and utensils (such as an electric razor or a chair) represents for him a form of friendship, an entering into human relations with their designer. The friendship between Brahe and Epstein themselves, in its gingerly progress, is presented as above all else an exchange of "attentions" or attention.

Brahe meditates:

"How does one describe subatomic reactions, when by definition they resemble nothing else?" Textbooks of popular science always begin "Imagine a . . ." (imagine a quartered orange, a sandwich, a tennis-ball), and what this means is, "Imagine something different from what is the case, that is to say something wrong."

A strange law of conservation in imagination and perception is always striving to restore things to the way they were before. Still, for all that, a scientist must try to explain; though when Epstein gets Brahe to explain things about his work, his attentiveness is so acute that it somehow seems as if he understood it all already. One day, as they are alone in the skies, following in their aeroplane the curve of the nuclear "ring" beneath them, Epstein challenges Brahe: "Well, what about your experiment?" Brahe gropes for helpful analogies, but Epstein stops him: "No, not like that, not like

Why should everything you tell me have to come encumbered with a twin?" Brahe tries again, this time with more success; but as he talks, the two lean closer together, and the roar of the engine envelops them, so no third person could have heard what was said. So extreme an isolation is the fitting *mise-en-scène*, we are to understand, for someone trying to describe without recourse to similitudes.

Later in the story it is Brahe's turn to challenge Epstein, the man of words. To honour Epstein, the municipality of Geneva has put on a fireworks display, and after it, as Brahe and he are sitting together in the dark, Brahe asks Epstein what he means by "seeing" – for example, what did he "see" during the fireworks? Epstein responds (and this time we are allowed to overhear) with a lengthy chemical, technological and geometrical account of the display, and in this bravura performance it appears to us, at first hearing, that he is freely indulging in similitudes. Then, of course, it dawns on us that they are not similitudes after all, for a pyrotechnic display is itself a matter of simulating all sorts of objects (trees, flowers and faces), in terms of light. Epstein reflects on the curious relation of light to description: all the rest of the physical world can be enumerated by means of nouns and verbs, but the only part of speech with which light seems to have an affinity is adjectives, like "pallid" or "cold" or "flickering".

The scanty events of the story draw to a denouement soon after this. Brahe's nuclear experiment proves successful, demonstrating a radical symmetry in natural processes and a new unifying law; and, under an overpowering impulse, he rushes across the city in his car to find Epstein, only to discover that his friend, having won the Nobel prize, is leaving the country. An oddly exciting "thriller" climax ensues (reminding me, though in reverse, of the scene in the Buñuel film, where Christ is hurrying across country to Santiago, to be in time to greet his pilgrims). Epstein is in fact

at the railway station, killing time as he waits for his train by studying a model of Geneva, complete with toy electric trains; and in his mind's eye, as he stands there, he prophetically "sees" a multitude of things about Brahe – sees him among his fellow-physicists, sees him in bed with Epstein's secretary-assistant Gilda, sees him approaching through the streets of Geneva. "And now?" asks the breathless Brahe, on arrival. "Now another story will need to begin." "And what about this one?" "This one is finished." "Will anyone write it down?" "I don't know, I think not. The important thing was not to write it but to have a feeling about it [*provare un sentimento*]."

Epstein's complaint against similitudes cannot help reminding us of "modernist" literary theory and of Ezra Pound's aggrieved complaint against "cette poésie farcie de 'concreme'". All the same, it is not for nothing that del Giudice invokes science, and one suspects a play or pun upon that tired old phrase, "the experimental novel".

How shall we read *Atlante occidentale*? It pulpitates with symmetries and parallels, so that almost any topic touched upon – whether vintage aircraft, or lights switched on and off, or attention and distraction, or Geneva pacifism – is dense with reverberations; yet prudence suggests that it is better not to try to explain it in terms of allegory or symbolism – for what are they but reduplications of the kind Epstein complains of? (Thus, though Epstein, with his visionary abilities and manipulative proclivities, evidently takes many of the liberties of a fictional narrator, we must not conclude that he "stands for" the art of narration.) So how shall we know when we may stop parallel-hunting and decide that we have read the novel? In such cases in mathematics there might be an exact answer, in the form of an elegant equation; and one senses that this is a possibility that, in this very punning and attractive novel, playfully anyway, del Giudice might like us to entertain.

Parma and the past

Filippo Donini

ATTILIO BERTOLUCCI
La camera da letto
256pp. Milan: Garzanti. L.20,000.

Attilio Bertolucci, a poet whose début in the early 1930s was encouraged by Montale, started in 1956 on a sort of verse chronicle in which he narrates the story of his family from the time of Napoleon down to 1933. It is not a systematic, chronological story, but rather a series of flashes illuminating in well-chosen detail particular episodes in the lives of his grandfather and mother, and in his own adolescence. How the grandfather, a prosperous gentleman farmer on the rich plain near Parma, consented to the wedding of his favourite daughter to a man from the Apennines, the descendant of sturdy horsemen who had come long before from Tuscany; how the young couple suffered the death of three children before giving birth to the poet and his brother; how his mother used to drive her buggy across country; how the grandfather became ill and died; and then the death of a beloved uncle, the poet's unhappy years at school and his first emotions and pleasures in the discovery of the countryside, the city of Parma and finally poetry and love: these are the subjects of the three parts, divided into twenty-nine chapters, of *La camera da letto*.

Italian critics have been at a loss to classify this strange and delightful work. Is it a novel in verse, poetical autobiography or a sort of *chanson de geste*? Pietro Citati has compared it to Goethe's *Lehrjahre*, G. Barberi Squarotti has defined it as a "romanzo pascoliano" (a novel à la Pascoli) because of the continuous presence and love of the countryside. But what matters is that *La camera da letto* reads exceedingly well and in places the splendour of its poetry is both dazzling and enrapturing. The horsemen riding down from the hills; the evocation of an unknown baby sister; the joyous driving of the young mother whose cheeks are like the flowers of the magnolia; the child going to school for the first time; the deaths of both the grand-

father and the uncle; the shyness and trepidation of the young man in love; these are passages of great beauty. But more than any particular episode, what lingers in the memory is an intimation of the sacredness of the family and of its source and centre, the bedroom (*la camera da letto*), together with an enchanting, mysterious feeling of the permanence of the past. One senses that Bertolucci has studied his Proust and his Eliot.

In the first part of the poem, which deals mostly with events in the family before the author's birth, the metre – as if to underline the ancestral quality of the subject – is the traditional hendecasyllabic line of the great Italian narrative poems, interspersed with shorter lines, mainly heptasyllabic. The second and third parts, however, dealing with more recent events, consist of longer lines imitating roughly the classical hexameter, but without any strict regularity, so that the impression is rather of a derivation from Whitman (a self-portrait of the author as a young man "hungry from Maeterlinck and Whitman in pocket editions" comes as no surprise) or from the more colloquial parts of Eliot's *Four Quartets*. But here, too, the longer lines are interrupted by shorter, or by very short ones, so that no effect of monotony can arise.

Two other protagonists command our attention in the poem: the city of Parma and the countryside round about it. The charm of that small capital which to Stendhal offered an image of political intrigue and of love affairs, and which Pasolini described as a sort of microcosm of Europe, comes out vividly in Bertolucci's beautiful lines, as he describes its streets, its palaces, its domes, its river, and even its street-cars. But his love of the city extends also to its countryside. On every page a tree, a field, a flower, a particular view, the different colours and sounds of each hour of the day and night are described with tender affection and an extraordinary power of evocation; while the country people recall the figures of the Months in Parma's superb Baptistery: one cannot read Bertolucci without thinking of them, nor in future will one be able to look at them without being reminded of his poem.

After the violence

Anna Laura Lepschy

MARIO RIGONI STERN
L'anno della vittoria
159pp. Turin: Einaudi. L.10,000.
8806 58990 3

Mario Rigoni Stern made his name in 1953 with *Il sergente della neve*, one of the most striking Italian novels on the theme of the Second World War. In the form of an autobiographical memoir, it follows the vicissitudes of a group of *alpini* in the 1942-3 retreat from Russia. The recurring question, asked by one of the narrator's Brescian companions: "Sergentmaggiore, che riviamo a baits?" (Sergeant-major, will we get back to our hut?), can also be taken as the leitmotif of Rigoni Stern's subsequent books: *Quota Albania* (1971) and *Ritorno sul Don* (1973), as well as of his *Storia di Tönle* (1978), which goes back to the period between the unification of Italy and the First World War. The herdsman Tönle, driven into exile after a brush with the police, succeeds in secretly making his way home every winter to the *alpiplano*, the upland plain of Asiago (Rigoni Stern's own part of the Veneto), to which he can only make a definitive return as an old man at the end of the war. *L'anno della vittoria*, in which old Tönle makes a fleeting reappearance, is the sequel to the *Storia di Tönle*.

The return home in this case is the return, in 1918, to the *alpiplano* village which had been abandoned and destroyed during the war, and which the fourteen-year-old protagonist Matteo, his family and their fellow refugees set about rebuilding, in an attempt to recapture their past.

Rigoni Stern conveys the violence which had been wrought not only on the village but also on the landscape around it. Slowly the land is prepared for cultivation once again, a communal oven is reopened, a flock of mountain sheep is bought, the school is rebuilt and the villagers find work in nearby sand quarries and forests. As the village is repopulated the old customs reappear and festivals are once more celebrated; but a new "concerti" is also felt:

young Mosé Tripp returns from Turin bringing news of Gramsci and his *Ordine nuovo* as well as intimations of socialist revolution. As election time approaches, the new political consciousness finds expression in clashes between fascists and socialists, and these result in further deaths. But in spite of hints of a new threat to the stability of the village the novel ends optimistically, and the "victory" of the title is no longer in doubt; the solidarity and determination of the villagers have been rewarded by the rebirth of their community and the new year is heralded by the birth of another child for Matteo's parents, the first new life in the rebuilt village.

Rigoni Stern is never sentimental; his style is sparing and his images concrete. He evokes the rhythms of physical labour on the land, of the passing of time. He conveys, through skilful use of standard Italian, the contrast between the authenticity of the dialect spoken by the people and the artificiality and confusion of bureaucratic jargon.

The series of minuscule (12x17 cms) paperback originals and reprints "La memoria", published by Sellerio, Via Siracusa 50, Palermo, has now reached over 100 volumes; among them are seven short works by Leonardo Sciascia: *Dalle parti degli infedeli*, L.2,500. *Atti relativi alla morte di Raymond Roussel*, L.2,500. *Kermesse*, L.3,000. *La sentenza memorabile*, L.2,500. *Cronache*, L.5,000. *Per un ritratto dello scrittore da giovane*, L.5,000, and *L'affaire Moro*, L.5,000. (This was written in 1978 and first published in *La civiltà perfezionista*. Sciascia was a member of the parliamentary investigative committee of "l'affaire" and published together with this new edition of the essay is the final report, presented to the Commission and the Lower House, by Sciascia and a minority of the members of the Commission.)

Also in the series are Alberto Moravia's *Coma e i briganti*, L.2,500, Alessandro Manzoni's *Storia della Colonna infame*, L.5,000, Gesualdo Bufalino's *Museo d'ombre*, L.4,000, as well as his earlier *Diceria dell'untore*, L.6,000 and Alfredo Panzini's *Grammatica italiana*, L.5,000.

Model prisoners

D. J. Enright

RICHARD WILEY
Soldiers in Hiding
199pp. Chatto and Windus. £9.95.
0701131365

Teddy Maki has his own television programme, the "Original Amateur Hour". When it began in the early 1950s it featured serious acts, but now it resembles something dug up by Clive James to make British viewers feel superior: contestants win by drinking water through their noses or farting a tune. Maki, who speaks perfect English, takes a mean, similarly cynical pleasure in misdirecting American tourists in Tokyo.

He and his friend Jimmy Yamamoto were Americans, Los Angeles Japanese, who happened to be in Japan, playing in a band, when war broke out. Both of them fell in love with Kazuko, sister of their local agent, Ike, and Jimmy married her. *Faute de mieux*, they joined the Japanese army, and found themselves in the Philippines, guarding American prisoners. Jimmy refused to shoot an officer who had outraged Major Nakamura by his incorrect attitude — he showed himself insufficiently defeated — and was thereupon shot by the major. When Maki was ordered in turn to shoot the American, he complied. Discharged, he found his way to Tokyo and married Kazuko — an admirable, unromanticized figure — who bore a son, ostensibly his, actually Jimmy's. Except for his devotion to the child, named Milo, Maki is a ghost, estranged, belonging nowhere. "Like a man on a rotisserie turning evenly but thoughtlessly through time", he cannot forget that he was able to kill where Jimmy preferred to die.

Thirty years after his supposed death in the jungle, Ike returns, having posed as a Filipino, settled in Manila, even married there. Such things did happen. With Milo, now a pop star, and Ike, Maki plans an act of revenge: to have ex-Major Nakamura on his show, "the amateur of that particular hour". On Christmas Day — an American irony, this — they and a camera crew, all dressed in miscellaneous army uniforms from the studio wardrobe, interview

Nakamura in a warehouse which the major, now a pharmacist, has turned into a theatre. In a weird climax which avoids stagnancy by the haphazardness of its events, they don Noh masks and recite lines from an old play. The shooting in the Philippines is very nearly reenacted. For Nakamura is just a mad old man. "All soldiers die" is the conclusion; "None of them are guilty." This — after all those years — is no sentimental cop-out. Surely no one should suffer at the same time both the pangs of conscience and the pains of age. For what life is left to him, Maki is released from his guilt, more or less mended. Now he will help lost foreigners to find their way.

Précis makes the story sound melodramatic; in its telling the novel is controlled and sombre, unportentously thoughtful, persuasively low-key. Traces of awkwardness in the writing, as if it were a painstaking translation, add to the impression of honesty; and incidents are the more effective in that "local colour" is applied with a light brush. During a fire raid the neighbours take water from a public bathhouse; never mind the tatami, the matting, the owner tells them, "and quickly the tatami was soaked and torn, the heels of street shoes turning its straight straw lines into twisted sores, like the blooms of an awful flower". A nearby temple is on fire, and the huge image of the Buddha changes its expression into one of faint surprise as it begins to melt; the faces of the dead monks have no expression, show no surprise.

After Hiroshima, Maki knows there won't be much trouble, the Japanese will surprise the Americans by being model prisoners: "That had been Major Nakamura's point." And when the Emperor, on the radio, announces the surrender to his subjects, what is extraordinary is not what the Emperor says but the fact that he is speaking. "Our losses were incalculable", Maki reflects, whole cities wiped out, but what is interesting is that now they are crying for the greatest loss of all, "the virginity of the Emperor's voice".

This first novel has a dignity, a decency and a humanity so rare in contemporary fiction as to make one wish for more resounding terms of commendation. It takes the nominally exotic and, without deracinating it, without straining after programmatic effects, reveals it as universally authentic.

stylistic recognition. Oscar Wilde, pulp sleuth thriller, epistolary narrative, creation myth, Agatha Christie, self-fi, boys' comic adventure yarn, fairy story and fable are all allusive presences. So is P. G. Wodehouse — a Woosteresque hero in one chapter venerates his manservant, Jove: "You've done what you always do, old friend. Like the *deus ex machina* in a Greek play, you descended at the psychological moment and booted me niftily from catastrophe into funville. Rather well done." Elsewhere, a very funny bit of bogus Beckett teacups striving towards the Pagoda goal:

this voice, only friend I have in the world, save the swans creaking painfully upriver on the waterline, always on their last flight I like to think, save them and the old sore place in my cheek my tongue always searches out for company . . . and I, the poor soul stuck in the paradox, going left to right, right to left, up and down the path, carving my furrow, boustrophedon they call it in some circles . . .

All this parody, pastiche and cliché, however, is skillfully marshalled to enrich the underlying theme of Quest. A Kafka-like impossibility of arrival is implicit, and the humorous, corny, melodramatic elements both offset and make more resonant a ruminal, visionary, neo-mystical voice which seeks to approach the imponderable, not quite-graspable instant by way of a Game "where nothing more than an approach is permissible".

As the publishers remark, this novel defies classification; the author, though, approaches a definition of intent — "It is the Player's duty to play the Game, not by turning his back on the world, but by using every opportunity that the Rules of the Game allow to increase the bounds of delight within the world."

A Colloquium to mark the centenary of the birth of Ollie Stapleton will be held at the University of Liverpool from September 26 to 28.

The psalmist's voice

Craig Brown

NICHOLAS MOSLEY
Judith
297pp. Secker and Warburg. £11.95.
043628832

Having completed his extraordinary two-volume biography of his father Oswald, Nicholas Mosley has returned to his planned seven-volume series of novels. *Judith* is the fourth in the series. It reveals many of the same preoccupations that made the father-and-son biography so tense, so humane and ultimately so moving.

The father came to excuse evil as a possible force for good; as a politician and an orator, he became infatuated by the power of words and of acting; he believed that the ease with which speech and image could be controlled was emblematic of the larger control the individual could gain over his own destiny and the destiny of others. Meanwhile, the son remained sceptical. In *Judith*, this scepticism has deepened towards mysticism. Question marks hold the narratives up like curtain-rings. By pulling away ideas of reality, Mosley seeks to view something grander and more far-reaching. One of the reasons that his novels are seen as "experimental" is that their eventual pursuit is out of kilter with others. Characterization — if characterization is the close delineation of the things that make people different — is virtually non-existent. Narrative, here, is self-conscious, jerky, repetitive, hard to follow, often just a demonstration of the protagonists' need for a narrative. "What falsifications result from the need for a story?" asks Judith, who is telling her tale in letters to three characters from Mosley's earlier *Catastrophe Practice*. With their repetitions, their questions, their obsession with symbols, their acknowledgment of a force beyond and inaccessible to words, Mosley's books often seem closer to psalms than to novels.

"Of course the language is difficult. It has to circle itself: at the centre there is silence." Few novelists are so assured by their lack of assurance. Judith is an ex-actress who is searching for a reality beyond her own reality by entering disparate contemporary worlds:

Intrusive echoes

Patricia Craig

ELIZABETH JOLLEY
The Well
176pp. Viking. £9.95.
0670811033

"Ding dong bell", goes the nursery rhyme, "pussy is in the well." A jazzed-up version of these lines is sung, at the start of Elizabeth Jolley's striking new novel, by an Australian orphan named Katherine, driving home from a party at a hotel, at which she has distinguished herself by dancing expressively. Katherine is accompanied, on the journey home, by her friend and benefactor Miss Hester Harper, with whom she lives in an old stone shepherd's cottage in the bush. The truck, a Toyota with kangaroo bar attached, is one of Miss Harper's extravagant recent purchases, and Katherine, an unqualified driver, is driving it incautiously, so incautiously in fact that she cannot avoid something which comes at them suddenly on a usually deserted track. "It's not a roo, Katherine," says Miss Harper, having got out to investigate. "It's not a roo."

This incident, which is at the centre of *The Well*, is recounted twice, once in the opening pages and then again in its proper place in the sequence of events; and when the book ends Miss Harper is about to deliver another version to a group of neighbouring children who are clamouring for a story. The story is the important thing, along with the person who understands the original experiences. This literary principle is unfolded to Hester Harper, in the all-purpose story which she frequently, by a writer's temporarily at loss for a character, an intruder, who is needed to bring about a particular dramatic end, introducing discord into a relationship. There is a moment of playful, self-

Of course you can fix things, and you will succeed a time: you have to do this, in fact, in order to stay alive. But if you're clever enough for this, then you know that it isn't reality. Reality is something beyond yourself: if it's not, what's the point? But it's where all meaning lives, and where all joy lives, and where all love lives: and don't you forget it.

Thus Professor Ackerman, a cyberneticist, guides her in her quest. For all its spiritual concerns, the novel operates within solid contemporary worlds: from a *Private Eye* parody ("wriggling like fish-bait in a tin") to an adman in India, to the perimeters of an American airbase in Suffolk. It is the dislocation between the commonplace and what lies behind the commonplace — both in what is described and the words used to describe it — that makes the book so appealing. Mosley's usual technique of dialogue (I thought: /I said: /I thought I might say) is used, and his confident and overt distillations of truth (rather more Victorian than experimental) are nicely saved from banality or sermonizing by the eccentricity of their means of expression. Even when pursuing his themes of free-will, the need to act, and the attraction of pessimism, Mosley can be both charming and funny: "Of course Red Riding Hood knew her grandmother was a wolf why else would she have gone to visit her?"

In Mosley's much earlier novel *Impossible Object*, a series of interlocking short stories in which the characters were now central, now peripheral, now observers, now observed, he began to play with Kleist's notion that human beings are never at ease because they are split between being doers and being observers of what they are doing. In this (so far unnamed) series, he is using the same pattern, though on a broader scale, to hint at something richer: the possibilities of salvation though this unease. "If, inside the theatre of memory, you have become yourself one of the figures that pop up at windows, what is it that you might see when you look out?" Switching perspective from one book to another, from one character to another, from a watchtower to a three-eyed sheep, from the Bible to a television flicker-switch, from the immediate to the eternal and back again, Nicholas Mosley is in the midst of constructing an answer as tricky and uneven as holy, as powerful and as old-fashioned as prayer.

reflexiveness, like the one which occurs towards the end of *Miss Penobly's Inheritance*, when the headmistress Miss Thorne, a character in a novel by a character in Elizabeth Jolley's novel, recalls reading a statement to the effect that "being a character in a novel is apparently not being a character at all".

Elizabeth Jolley has her own intruder at her fingertips — a dead one, perhaps, but no less disruptive for that — whom lame Hester Harper, with the resourcefulness expected of her, proceeds to deposit in a well. This disused well has earlier inspired some childish make-believe on the part of the two women, who imagine it to be the abode of a troll, into whose clutches a princess has fallen; and then, at Katherine's prompting, exchange this pair for a more romantic figure, a fairy-tale prince. Katherine, whose head is stuffed with film-stars and dreams of romance, is all the time half-consciously resisting Miss Harper's half-conscious wish to impose on her a kind of retardation, to the point of fashioning a young man for herself out of the most unpromising material, the grisly occupant of the well. Echoes from quite a few fairy tales and nursery rhymes are sounded in this book, if in a slightly distorted form, putting Elizabeth Jolley in the company of other authors, like Angela Carter and Barbara Comyns, who've turned to folklore to procure their headiest effects. Her manner, though, is quite distinctive, accommodating frivolity and sprightliness, and at times getting close to a Fibbancian effervescence.

Elizabeth Jolley's fiction is also notable for the sharpness with which its incidents are envisaged and assembled; if the author goes in for oddity of tone or angle of vision, it is generally in the interests of high spirits or pointedness. Even her peculiarities of punctuation contribute to a rather dashing and exhilarating quality. She knows how to make things hum.

Enigmatic relations

H. R. Woudhuysen

JOHN GOWS (Editor)
The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke
279pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £40.
0198127464

There is something very odd about Fulke Greville. It is not just his brittle and often harsh literary style, which leaves his meaning unclear, nor his extraordinary end — fatally stabbed by a discontented servant who had just done up Greville's breeches as he was "coming from stool" — nor his witless accumulation of vast fortunes and estates, that produces a feeling of uneasiness about him. It is as if Greville, contemptuous of the world and smugly terrified of God, forced himself to engage in friendships, yet all the while nurtured an overwhelming uneasiness and insecurity about the complementary demands of loyalty and affectionate respect.

At the very end of his life of Sidney, Greville asks the reader to "use it freely, [and] judge honorably of my friend and moderately of me, which is all the return that out of this barren stock can be desired or expected". The status and idea of friendship crop up in many contexts with Greville, most famously on his tomb which he had inscribed "FULKE GREVILLE / SERVANT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH / COUNCILLOR TO KING JAMES / AND FRIEND TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY". The title-page of the 1652 printing of *The Life* picks up the same theme, describing it as "Written by Sir Fulke Greville Knight, Lord Brooke, a Servant to Queen Elizabeth, and his Companion & Friend". The gossip surrounding Greville constantly reverts to the same subject: the Restoration historian David Lloyd (who also rather mysteriously claimed that Greville was Shakespeare's and Ben Jonson's master) reports that "his mornings were devoted to his Books, his afternoons to his knowing Friends, his nights to his debonair Acquaintance". Lloyd is usually dismissed as an unreliable fabricator, but one would dearly like to know what he meant here. Aubrey tells a story in his life of Bacon that

In his lordship's prosperity Sir Fulke Greville, lord Brookes, was his great friend and acquaintance; but when he was in disgrace and want, he was so unworthy as to forbid his butler to let him have any more small beer, which he had often sent for, his stomach being nice, and the small beere of Grayes line not liking his pallet.

An even more damning view of Greville's capacity for friendship comes from an earlier letter, of 1588, in which Thomas Fowler says of him, "I never trusted him with a word of my mind or thought". Greville's fame as a patron and his assiduous courtship of those in power are well known; but who were his friends? "I began this work", he says at the end of his account of Sidney, "to entertain and instruct myself": there is something in the work that suggests that this was not just an empty formula.

John Gows's long-awaited edition, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville*, happily coincides in its publication with the quatercentenary of Sidney's death. In addition to Greville's life of Sidney, Gows has edited the unfinished and rather puzzling *A Letter to an Honorable Lady*. This may have been written for an identifiable and unhappily married woman — Gows is willing to accept that she could have been Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, but does not press the claim. The *Letter* could simply be a formal address or exercise composed with no specific recipient in mind: Greville's inability or unwillingness to complete it leaves its literary status unclear. Again, the question of the work's audience leaves the reader with an uncomfortable feeling that Greville may not have thought that the *Letter* would have had any readers.

The choice of copy-text for the *Letter* is relatively straightforward. The version which is included in Greville's posthumous *Certain Learned and Elegant Workes* of 1633 seems to have been taken from a lost transcript of the work in the Warwick Castle manuscript which is now in the British Library. This contains corrections in Greville's own hand, Gows prints a diplomatic text taken from the manuscript with a few emendations of a minor sort from 1633. A random check of his text against

the manuscript reveals one or two errors and inaccuracies.

The life of Sidney presents a more challenging problem. The work was not published until 1652, when it appeared under the title of *The Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney*. It was dedicated to the Countess of Sunderland, Algernon Sidney's sister and Waller's "Sacharissa", by P. B., who has not been identified. The publisher was Henry Seile but its printer remains unknown. In addition to 1652 three manuscripts of the work survive: one at Trinity College, Cambridge, which the work's previous editors, Grosart and Nowell Smith, knew of; one in Shrewsbury Public Library, first described in 1954; and one privately owned by Bent Juel-Jensen in Oxford. Gows argues that the Juel-Jensen and Shrewsbury manuscripts comprise one early version of the work, which was revised by Greville into a state represented by the Trinity manuscript and then further revised to the form witnessed by the edition of 1652. The revisions are not in themselves immediately striking, but they would repay close examination for what they would reveal about how Greville worked and reworked his writings. Rejecting an old-spelling edition, Gows prints a carefully modernized and repunctuated text of 1652 and lists all the variants from the manuscripts. The accuracy of the text Gows prints appears exemplary. He has chosen, however, not to retain the work's title from 1652, but to follow the only other title it has been given, that in the Trinity manuscript, so that he proposes it should now be known as *A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney*. This is not an altogether happy decision. What sort of dedication it remains unclear. A glossary and index, a brief introduction and a detailed commentary add to the usefulness of this edition.

Gows dates the bulk of the composition of the *Dedication* to 1612-14, a couple of years later than most other scholars, and he rejects the understandable desire to see it as an overtly political attack on James I and the government of the day. He is, however, prepared to accept that the earliest version of the *Dedication*, which has not survived, was almost exclusively devoted to Sidney himself and probably omitted Chapters Fourteen to Seventeen. They drew on a manuscript of Camden's *Annals*, and concentrated their attention on the Earl of Essex and Queen Elizabeth. Gows also proposes that the work concluded with what we now read as Chapter Eighteen — a brief consideration of Greville's own works.

The rest of the *Dedication*, with the possible exception of most of Chapters Eight to Ten, which deal with the state of European politics and the possibilities of colonial expansion in the 1580s, is solely concerned with Sidney. Yet the *Dedication* is one of those difficult works that however many times you read it you are never quite sure what it is actually about. Joan Rees called it a work of "political hagiography" and Gows sees it as "biographical panegyric" yoked to civil history. The work as we have it suffers further from the need to look at it from at least three different perspectives. First, from the point of view of the events of the 1570s and 80s which are Greville's ostensible subject-matter; then from the first two decades of the seventeenth century when Greville was writing; and finally from the point of view of the 1650s, when the *Dedication* was first published, three years before the 1655 edition of Sidney's works. This contained an interesting life of him which has been attributed to William Dugard. And then there is the problem of whether the *Dedication*'s real interest lies in what it has to tell us about Sidney himself or whether its importance lies in its part as one of Greville's works. If we accept that it is not a "life" in the sense in which we understand it,

where does the emphasis lie in its dedication lie to Greville and his works or to Sidney? The *Dedication* to Sidney certainly gives the reader a sense of what Greville is like as a writer but his own life and personality remain obscured. In his life of Greville, Horace Walpole tried to get round this mysteriousness, even excused his own bitterly critical concentration on Sidney by maintaining that "writing his life is writing Sir Fulke Greville's". Even if this were convincing, Greville's own selectivity in the *Dedication* is sometimes arresting. He has something to say about the composite *Arcadia* of 1593 but nothing about either the *Orlando*

about how he thought the *New* might end — or more oddly, about Sidney's other literary works. He fails to mention that Sidney was married. He does not account for his own silence amid the public wailings in print that followed Sidney's death. Greville has some good circumstantial stories about Sidney — the episode of the tennis-court quarrel with the Earl of Oxford in 1579 and Sidney's magnificent gesture of giving his water-bottle to a dying common soldier on the battlefield at Zutphen — but his accounts of these and other occasions may not be absolutely accurate and may not have been intended to be taken as such. Nevertheless Greville is our only source for a few incidents which contribute something to our knowledge of Sidney. For example, if it were not for Greville we should not know that Sidney lodged in the printer Andreas Wechel's house in Frankfurt, nor that he wanted to lead Drake's 1585 expedition to the West Indies. And yet all too often Greville's own motives for including or suppressing stories and information, or simply getting facts wrong, are unclear. Greville could have said so much about his friend, but for reasons which cannot simply be dismissed as due to the demands of

Blotting a thousand

H. Neville Davies

MARVIN SPEVACK (Editor)
Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories and Tragedies Published According to the True Originall Copies: The Second, Third and Fourth Folio editions reproduced in facsimile
Cambridge: Brewer. £350 the set.
0859911993

When the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays was published in folio by his old associates in 1623, the Bodleian Library at Oxford acquired a copy, no doubt in accordance with the happy arrangement whereby the Stationers' Company undertook to deposit books there that the Company had registered. This particular volume, with a shop price of £1, was in due course stoutly bound by William Wildgoose for library use, and, after being chained to a press, became available to university readers. Some years later, however, it was disposed of, almost certainly as a superseded item when a new and expanded edition of Shakespeare, which included "seven Playes, never before Printed in Folio", was accessioned in 1664. With hindsight, even an out-and-out bibliophile can see that the decision to discard the old 1623 volume in favour of a new Third Folio was a blunder. Though not rare, First Folios were to become valuable assets: a fine copy was sold in 1980 for £269,430, and a shabby copy for £80,000. But some 240 years later, the ejected copy, minus its title-page, came to light in the hands of an undergraduate, the Wildgoose binding and evidence of former attachment to a chain revealing its origin. After some desperate money-raising the volume was bought back at a price of £2,800, that is, more than a dozen times the largest sum previously paid by the Bodleian for a single volume, well above the then going rate for a First Folio, but £200 less than a rival transatlantic offer.

In fact there is reason for scholarly libraries to possess all four seventeenth-century Shakespeare folios, the only complete collections of the plays (albeit lacking *Pericles* in 1623 and 1632) before the advent of multi-volume octavo sets; prepared by named editors, established a new mode in the eighteenth century. The folios of 1623, 1664, 1685 and 1685 have

no independent textual authority, of course, but they show the earliest attempts to present Shakespeare's plays to a reading public for whom Shakespeare's language and culture were fast becoming old-fashioned. Viewed from the Restoration world that the Third Folio was intended to serve, the age of Shakespeare already seemed remote, even mythic, the Elizabethans having taken on the character of a "glant" race before the flood". Dryden, who used those words, was notably well versed in the text of Shakespeare; but which text? When, for instance, in his Shakespearean play *All for Love*, his Cleopatra says of Antony, "Only thou / Cou'dst

the forms which he was working in, chose not to. He was writing twenty-five or thirty years after Sidney's death and nearly half a century after they had been enrolled on the same day at Shrewsbury School, and his true feelings about his old friend seem impenetrable even to himself.

John Gows has performed a valuable service in making an accurate text of Greville's *Dedication* available. There is still certainly more to be found about Greville's sources and his intentions in writing the work. Gows's notes are useful and at times very thorough, but if there is one slight criticism to be made of his edition as a whole it is that it suffers from a disappointing lack of curiosity about what Greville is up to and what he has to say. While there are a small number of irritating errors and inconsistencies in the edition, its typography and design leave a great deal to be desired: the inkings of some lines and single letters in the texts is very uneven and the spacing of the textual variants is so irregular as at times to make them look ludicrous. Readers should not be faced with this in a book from the Clarendon Press, costing £40 for under 300 pages.

triumph o'er thy self" the lines echoed are these, here quoted from the Third Folio:

Not *Cassars* Valour hath o're-thrown *Anthony*.
But *Anthony* hath Triumpht on it self.

In the First Folio version, where the second word of the second line is "*Anthony's*", the grammatical construction is somewhat different, and "valour" has to be understood as the subject of "hath Triumpht". It was the Second Folio that introduced the change by replacing the possessive ending with a comma, and the Third Folio then merely tidied away the superfluous punctuation and modernized the spelling. Since Dryden's echo corresponds in sense to F2-F3 rather than F1, it seems probable that the text he had in mind was one of the later folios, and it is primarily for making and exploring such observations that a full set of Shakespeare folios is useful to literary scholars.

Hitherto, short of consulting the original folios themselves, it has been necessary to turn to the Methuen facsimiles of 1904-09. The Brewer facsimiles now provide another possibility, although not, unfortunately, a satisfactory one. The Charlton Hinman First Folio of 1968 is the standard of excellence, yet the Brewer volumes could hardly be expected to measure up to that achievement, for Hinman was able to select thirty of the Folger Library's eighty First Folios to supply, between them, ideal copy for his photographers. More recently, Kenneth Muir and Michael J. B. Allen have provided, in a less elaborate venture, none the less excellent facsimiles of Shakespeare quartos, photographed mainly, but not exclusively, from copies at the Huntington Library. Both these important publications were produced with skill and care, and offer the necessary fineness of tonal reproduction. The Brewer volumes, on the other hand, like the old Methuen ones, print only black on white, and in a great many places do so with much less success than those Methuen volumes. All too often detail is uncertain. But while it was not feasible to exploit a range of copies on the luxurious Hinman scale, Marvin Spevack, who selected the three Brewer copy-texts from Cambridge college libraries, should have used more than a single original for each volume. Although Hinman took only some 180

pages out of about 900 from each of his two best copies, comparison of the worst Brewer pages with the same pages in my local Second, Third and Fourth Folios shows that even if Spevack had been limited to just two copies of each folio the result could have been much better. As it happens, the Queens' College copy of the Third Folio selected by Spevack is so often under-inked and so badly disfigured by blots that it is quite unsuitable for reproduction. Despite being very expensive, these facsimiles are, in places, simply unreadable. Furthermore, the light bindings are too flimsy for books of this type and price, while the lazy replication of the same prefatory material in all three volumes is almost unbelievably offhand.

A modern Daniel

Emma Letley

BEL MOONEY
The Stove Haunting
125pp. Methuen. £0.95.
0416 595502

Set in the West Country in the year of the prosecution of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, *The Stove Haunting* (Bel Mooney's first book for older children and written for her own son), tells the story of Daniel Richards, a twentieth-century eleven-year-old whose parents move from London to an old rectory in the country village of Winterstoke. Daniel, loner and dreamer, becomes mysteriously attracted by an old stove in the kitchen of his new home; sitting by it, and peering inside it, he hears the words "we can't change things". He is then transported back in time to the turbulent events of 1835.

In 1835, Daniel is a charity-child, an orphan taken in by the Revd and Mrs Forster; he "awakes" in a world where he is a stove boy and kitchen skivvy who is unable to read. He has one great friend, George, a farm-worker, through whom he becomes involved in the plight of a family of starving farm labourers. Slowly, Daniel loses his twentieth-century awareness as he becomes absorbed in the events in the nineteenth-century village; he watches the farm workers join together in early trade union (or Friendly Society) meetings get under way, learns how the Masters betray their promise to increase wages, and, with some dramatic incidents, tries to protect his friend George from arrest. George is saved but five other Winterstoke men are apprehended, tried, and sentenced to seven years transporta-

tion in Australia. George asks Daniel to leave his safe life with the Forsters and come with him, travelling around the country telling people about the Winterstoke men and talking to the newly-formed trade unions.

At this point of dilemma, Daniel falls into unconsciousness to wake up in his new home in the Winterstoke of today. Insisting that it was not merely a dream (although the dream frame unobtrusively contains the narrative) Daniel is at first frustrated that he will never know the end of his own story; but then, in the graveyard of his home village he finds a gravestone commemorating Daniel Richards who had remained a servant to the Forster family all his life and died aged seventy. The modern Daniel comes to understand that perhaps his experience was more than a dream; the tears and hard work of the original Daniel had so "impregnated" this old stove that his spirit had once again been released for Daniel to join.

The Stove Haunting is an accomplished and absorbing fantasy for children of about eleven and older; the intervention of past history in a present-day story (a technique much favoured by writers for children) is skilfully handled; and the borderline between past and present sensitively controlled. There is a real sense of the dangers and excitement of change and of contrasting reactions to it. The tone is assured except for a few occasions when the reader feels bullied: history, thinks the contemporary Daniel, is always about kings and queens and never about ordinary people. *The Stove Haunting* is a little too intent on proving that this is not the case, and on instilling in the youthful reader an enthusiasm similar to that of the author's own son who is, we are told in the dedication, "interested in the past". This educative note does not, however, seriously damage a strange and compelling story.

Real-life folk

Iain Bamforth

GORDON JARVE
The Wild Ride and other Scottish Stories
144pp. Viking Kestrel. £5.95.
0670 80987 X

In his introduction to this collection of children's tales, which he has edited for the immediately prepubertal age-group, Gordon Jarve complains of suffering in his own childhood from a surfeit of stories based on the conventions of music-hall, folklore and history. He intends to provide stories about "ordinary people set in the modern real-life world" (any reasonably glibly eleven-year-old is permitted to wonder just how many worlds there are impatiently attending his development), but it is difficult to escape the impression that the stories grouped in this volume themselves suffer from a peculiar datedness. With the exception of Joan Lingard's "Silver Linings", all have previously appeared in other collections; almost without exception they represent a rural rather than urban experience, and those folkloric and historical tendencies that cluttered the editor's childhood are not, it seems, to be entirely suppressed. There is much revealing in ghostly occurrences, poaching and sailing adventures, revindications of conventional adult wisdom and religious conflict in a marginal adult world which threatens to oppress the far more tolerant childish domain.

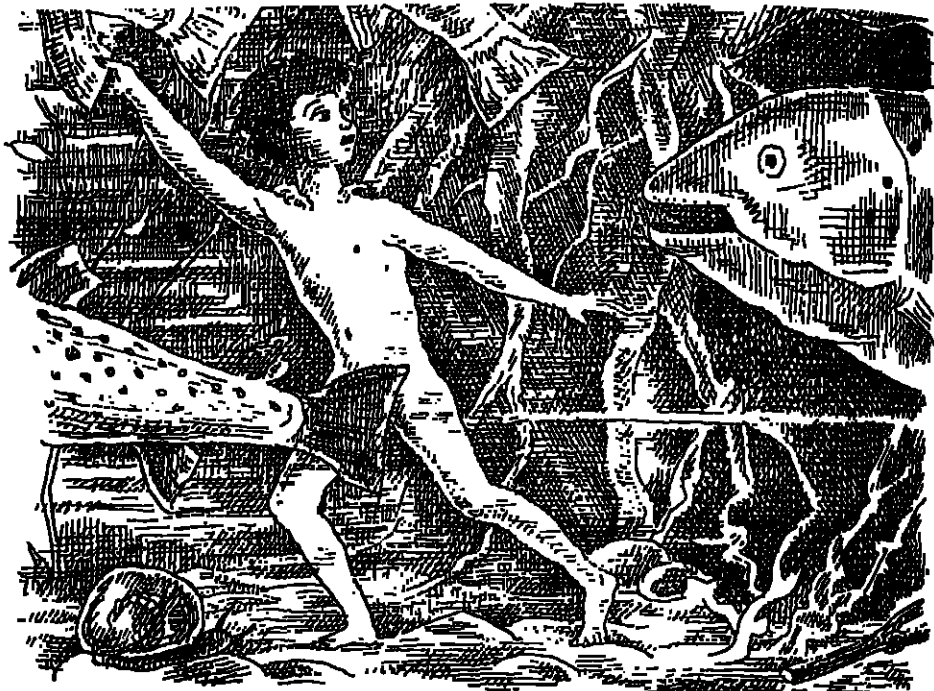
What distinguishes these stories, and indeed, what is particularly Scottish about them, is their humour, which is wry and dry and only occasionally sentimental. There are fine contributions from the most prolific and best-known of Scottish short story writers - Iain Crichton Smith and George Mackay Brown - and an excellent piece which displays the most realistic (modern, real-life world-ish) that is sensibility among the authors in this collection. "The Mystery of the Beehive" by Bernard Mac Laverly tells of a young boy, on holiday for the first time on his uncle's farm in Scotland, whose curiosity gets the better of him and who discovers, hidden in a canvas bag in one of the beehives which he tends, the remnants of an old Russian émigré's past: a collection of imperial roubles and a heap of soil. He is caught in the act of discovery and after an initially harsh rebuke from the old man, learns of his lonely

ness and flight from the pogroms in Russia, and understands the significance of these visible residues of memory from a past that is unrecoverable. Without preaching or being obviously parabolic, the story conveys well the sense of a childish mind on the frontier of adulthood, suddenly enlarged and encompassed at the same time.

But the most brilliantly observant and psychologically precise story is "Sunday Class" by the much-undervalued Elspeth Davie. Despite its brevity, it evokes with considerable humour the conflict between poetic childishness and prosaic adulthood. This is surely the only qualification for a story intended for reading by a ten or eleven-year-old and it is interesting that Davie's story appears not to have been expressly written for children at all.

The most recent Signal bookguide is *Classics for Children and Young People* (72pp. Thimble Press, Lockwood, Station Road, South Woodchester, Stroud, Glos. GL5 5EQ. £3.50. 0 903355 20 5), in which Margery Fisher recommends books ranging from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902) to *The Stone Book Quartet* (1976-8). The books are grouped in six sections ("The Listening Child", "Magic, New and Traditional", "Animals as Characters", "Neighbourhood Tales", "Danger and Endeavour" and "Landmarks"); which are briefly introduced and each book is given a short critical essay setting it in its literary context.

Also recently published is *Children's Books of the Year 1986*, edited by Julia Eccleshare (116pp. National Book League. Paperback, £3.50. 0 85353 402 0). The book contains an annotated list of 275 titles published over the past twelve months. The titles, which are briefly described, are divided into sections, such as "Picture Books", "Beginning to Read", "Fiction for Older Readers", "The Living World" and "Crafts and Hobbies", and there is a new classification of "Books to Read Aloud", which contains stories both for the very young and for the older child. In her introduction, Julia Eccleshare discusses the past year in children's publishing, noting, among other trends, the present "chill economic wind". *Children's Books of the Year* is available, post free, from the Publications Office, National Book League, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ.



Tom in the trout pool, from *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley. Gollancz's 1961 edition of the book, which has a text "specially prepared" by Kathleen Lines and illustrations by Harold Jones, has recently been reissued in paperback (222pp. Gollancz. £3.95. 0 575 03879 9).

Dog days

Humphrey Carpenter

ALLAN AHLBERG
Wolf
Illustrated by Fritz Wegner
155pp. Viking Kestrel. £6.95.
0670 808326

Allan Ahlberg is a master of comic picture-book text-writing. Who can forget that resonant opening in his *Happy Families* series, "Mr and Mrs Hay were a horse", or the story of Mrs Wobble the Waitress, who wobbled everything all over everybody and eventually made her fame and fortune because of it? And perhaps still best of all is *The Baby's Catalogue*, in which there are no words at all, but behind Ahlberg's wife Janet's pictures lie whole chapters of unspoken text.

Wolf is a departure for Ahlberg, or rather, a move into the conventional form of a short novel for children. The oddest thing about it is the looseness of the writing. Freed from the strain of the picture-book, Ahlberg understandably wants to enjoy himself with words. Unfortunately most of his personal qualities vanish in the process. There are now and then, some nice ironies, as in a school scene:

During assembly, Mr Blocker talked about how Jesus loved the little children and suffered them to come unto Him. He talked about some boys who'd been having a spitting competition in the back playground. He warned what would happen if they did it again.

But most of the time, the narrative is deliberately flat. Worse, so is the plot.

Striking a chord

Craig Brown

ANTHONY HOROWITZ
The Falcon's Maltese
160pp. Grafton. £5.95.
000 383 091 8

Those children embarking on their second decade who have only recently got over the shock of discovering that Santa Claus does not exist may be additionally traumatized by Anthony Horowitz's bloodthirsty thriller, "Ho Ho . . .", says Horowitz's department-store Santa, but he doesn't make the third "ho". The children surrounding him are left looking at "the body twitching on the chair, at the red stuff that was staining his beard".

Blood guashes merrily in *The Falcon's Maltese*. Even the pigeons in Trafalgar Square gurgle and keel over after one of the many villains, a man on other occasions given to disposing of offending traffic wardens in concrete on the M6, focus their painfully with poisoned chair.

Wolf seems to be a sort of anti-story. Like Kafka's hero in "Metamorphosis", Eric Banks, lying in bed, finds he has turned into another creature - in his case a Norfolk terrier. He has some mild adventures as a dog, in fact all too mild - performing tricks outside the fish and chip shop, and finding his lost toddler sister at the school fête. When temporarily back in human form he confides his secret to his friend Roy. Together they puzzle out what may be going on. Their guesses are perfectly sensible, but they have to remain guesses, because at the end of the book Eric simply stops turning into a dog, and that is that. Possibly it is because sister Emily, who always wanted a dog, has now been given one. Perhaps it was she who unconsciously wished her brother into a dog? Or then again, perhaps not.

Fritz Wegner's illustrations are as flaccid as the story. Ahlberg shows some signs of wanting to conjure up the atmosphere of a suburban primary school and the back streets surrounding it, but even this is done half-heartedly. One hopes that, after this odd vacation from his real vocation, he will get back to Mr and Mrs Hay the Horse and others of their kind.

The winner of the 1986 Children's Book of the Year Award is Janet Collins for *Bary* (Blackie), which also won the 1984 Kathleen Fidler Award. The judges for this year's Macmillan Prize for new work by young illustrators have recently been announced. They are Quentin Blake, Raymond Briggs, Jill Murphy and Michael Wace. Entries should be sent to Macmillan Children's Books by the middle of March 1987 and the winner will be announced in May 1987.

And when the humour is not red, it is most certainly black. At one point, the young hero, a thirteen-year-old private detective, goes into a London restaurant called "Grannies" where he is served by a waitress using a walking-frame. Any child with a quick sense of humour should love it.

The Falcon's Maltese is, as its title suggests, a parody of Raymond Chandler for children. Even if children find it hard to cope with the Chanderlesque machinations of the plot they should chortle at the abundance of jokes, most of them first-class: the "brilliant but crooked" professor who "invented computer fraud like Santa, but he doesn't make the third 'ho'", and the hero's stupid older brother Herbert, who files bills under "W" for "waste-paper basket". The book will appeal particularly to streetwise London children, who will recognize the Hotel Splendide, owned by Jack Splendide, the poshness of Hampstead where "even the dustbins had burglar alarms" and "Can I hit him?" "Not yet, Boyle" striking a chord.

Paperbacks

Art and architecture

RENÉ GIMPÉL. *Diary of an Art Dealer*. Translated by John Rosenberg. 465pp. Hamish Hamilton. £6.95. 0 241 11761 5. GimpéL was the son of a famous art dealer and inherited galleries in Paris and New York. He died in a Nazi concentration camp in 1944, but these diaries cover the happier years between the wars. Crammed with marvellous cameos - of Marie Laurencin, Picasso ("his brown eyes like very worn counters in a child's game"), the ageing Renoir painting with brush tied to his arthritic fingers - this moving, well-translated book is essential reading for anyone interested in early modernism. The original French edition, *Journal d'un collectionneur*, was reviewed in the TLS of March 5, 1964.

JAMES LEES-MILNE. *The Earls of Creation*. 267pp. Century. £5.95. 0 7126 9464 1. In a field now increasingly covered by specialist scholarly studies *The Earls of Creation*, first published in 1962 and reviewed in the TLS of January 18, 1963, has a certain quaintness. James Lees-Milne illuminates the history of English taste in the first half of the eighteenth century through combined character-studies and art-historical assessments of five earls. His main thrust is devoted to the establishment of the Palladian orthodoxy under Burlington, Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, and the ninth Earl of Pembroke. The quintet is made up by the first Earl Bathurst, friend of Pope and layer-out of the vast and still intact formal park and woods at Cirencester; and, less convincingly, Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford, and his literary and artistic circle. The novelistic elegance and colour of the writing, and its pleasantly snobbish tone, do something to make up for the lack of illustrations.

Film

JEAN COCTEAU. *Beauty and the Beast: Diary of a film*. Translated by Ronald Duncan. 142pp. Dover/Constable. £6.50. 0 486 22776 6. Conceived in the last year of the war, made in the first year of the peace, Cocteau's second movie was a heroic undertaking. His eloquent diary, one of the best personal accounts of a *cinéma* work, covers his day-to-day travails from the eve of shooting in August 1945, when the fifty-six-year-old director was coping with painful burdles on his chest, to the first preview in June 1946 when Marlene Dietrich was there to hold his hand. Plagued by bad weather on location, power cuts in the studio, a shortage of everything (including decent film-stock), accidents and illnesses, a dedicated team of artists and technicians struggled on to help Cocteau realize his beautiful "realistic" fantasy. "We're counting on your work to re-establish French films," he's told; and he saw the picture as a redemptive act after the experience of the Occupation: "Five years of hate, fear, a waking nightmare. Five years of shame and slime. We were spattered and smeared with it even to our very souls. We had to survive . . . Whatever the cost, France must shine again." His technical adviser, René Clément, had just completed the classic semi-documentary tribute to the Resistance, *La Bataille du rail*; Cocteau's response was the way of the poet.

History

BRUNO BETTELHEIM. *Surviving the Holocaust*. 220pp. Flamingo. £3.50. 0 00 654178 X. This is a collection of essays on the psychology of the Nazi death camps, analyses of perpetrators, victims and onlookers. The earliest, "Individual and Mass Behaviour in Extreme Situations", appeared in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* in 1943 and was praised, remarkably, on interviews conducted by the author and two assistants while they were prisoners in the concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald in 1938-9. Bettelheim is a most scrupulous writer and does not flinch from uncomfortable fields of inquiry. Later pieces include discussions of the difficulties of opposing Nazism from within, the Jewish passivity as exemplified by the family of Anne Frank, and of what it took to survive with the camps in the context of a powerful attack on Linz, Wertheimüller's Oscar-winning film, *Seyen Besieger*. Readers in search of a documentary account of these terrible events will need to look elsewhere, but for insights

into what made people do it, what it was like to undergo, *Surviving the Holocaust* is an important book. Excepting a new introduction, it was first published in 1979 as part of *Surviving and Other Essays*.

Literature

WALTER ALLEN. *Tradition and Dream*. 358pp. The Hogarth Press. £4.50. 0 7012 0692 6. Twenty years after Walter Allen's sequel to the much reprinted *The English Novel* was first published (in 1964 and reviewed in the TLS of February 13 that year), his rigour and enthusiasm are as fresh as ever. After pointing to an initial distinction between the English novel, its characters rooted in society, and the American, in which they are outside it, Allen neatly shows how they have developed, even merged, during the century. The landmarks are there, the praise is never dutiful; without becoming whistle-stop, the guide to the land between them is made absorbing. Time has frequently come round to him (Green, Welch, May Sinclair, Lewis), but he remains refreshingly apart from fashion: "remarkable as it [Pilgrimage] is, once having read it, one feels little wish to return to it". Others - Robert Liddell, Glenway Westcott, James Hanley - await wide recognition. The process is echoed in the new afterword. Allen's knowledge is such that one points to omissions - Elizabeth Taylor, Wodehouse, Dawn Powell, Raven, Nabokov - without rancour.

FRANCES BEER (Editor). *The Juvenilia of Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë*. 389pp. Penguin. £2.95. 0 14 043267 1. These two anthologies of precocity make curious bedfellows but in one respect the resemblance is striking: each appears as a crude, alarmingly energetic caricature of the mature work which was to follow. From Austen, cruel, very funny little poison-pen portraits of carnivorous daughters on the look-out for husbands; from Brontë an astonishing and seemingly interminable romance written over a period of years (here much cut) featuring the son of the Duke of Wellington who becomes more darkly sinister with each improbable adventure that he encounters. There are sufficient riches down here at the bottom of the barrel to amuse the average interested reader, even if Frances Beer's introduction protests too much on their behalf.

ADAM PHILLIPS (Editor). *Charles Lamb: Selected prose*. 438pp. Penguin. £4.95. 0 14 043238 8. Charles Lamb, self-confessed "bundle of prejudices, the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies", has been well served by Adam Phillips - this is a splendid selection of the quirkily brilliant prose, all the more welcome for the space it devotes to Lamb's letters, masterpieces of Falstaffian wit and humanity. Inevitably, in such a compact selection there are serious omissions (the Penguin *Portable Charles Lamb*, which this has replaced, was more comprehensive). Nevertheless, this is a fine introduction to the most endearing of the English Romantics.

JULIAN SYMONS. *A. J. A. Symons: His life and speculations*. 289pp. Oxford University Press. £4.95. 0 19 281916 X. A. J. A. Symons was one of those dandified inter-war literati who might have been born only to feature later in the pages of an Anthony Powell novel. In fact, as emerges from this affectionately ironic biography by his younger brother, "A.J." (a style of address adopted early on to conceal the shameful "Alphonse" of his Christian name) was energetic, inventive and hard-working (at least initially) in support of his pet projects, such as the First Edition Society and the Wine and Food Society. Out of the disorganization, the financial peaks and troughs, the writer's block, emerged A. J.'s undisputed achievement, *The Quest for Corvo*; his innovative and widely acclaimed biography of Frederick Rolfe, the Nineties writer whose ineffectual life seems to have struck a particular chord with Symons. In an afterword to this paperback edition of *A. J. A. Symons*, which was first published in 1950 (and reviewed in the TLS of March 17 of that year), Julian Symons is mildly concerned that he might have drawn too unfavourable a portrait of his brother, but the work itself seems to belie this, being calm, humorous and just, if perhaps over-detailed, about A. J.'s collapsed marriage.

VIRGINIA WOOLF. *Three Guineas*. 206pp. Hogarth Press. £3.95. 0 7012 0701 9. Anger boils to the surface of this sequel to *A Room of One's Own*, replacing the urbane conversational charm of the earlier essay. The central theme linking patriarchy and fascism brought accusations of "silly", "odd", and "muddled" from Virginia Woolf's contemporaries in 1938 (though it received a long, highly favourable review in the TLS of June 4). Today the book stands as a seminal, explosive polemic on women, education, exclusion and war. The text is studded with damning facts and quotations, surrounded by a further layer of subversion packed like bundles of dynamite in the footnotes. It is now being rediscovered as a standard feminist work; yet Woolf regarded "feminism" as a "false and futile" label. An excellent candidate for reprint, with a useful introduction by Hermione Lee. Woolf's *The Common Reader, Second Series* (330pp. Hogarth Press. £4.95. 0 7012 1908 4) is a selection of essays from over 100 written between 1926 and 1931. John Donne, Defoe, Parson Woodforde, Mary Wollstonecraft, Swift's *Journal to Stella*, Hazlitt and De Quincey are among the subjects under her perceptive scrutiny, rounded off with the meditation on "How should one read a book?" - at least part of the purpose of reading, she concludes, is "not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers". It was reviewed in the TLS of October 20, 1932.

Reference

GEORGE R. STEWART. *A Concise Dictionary of American Place Names*. 550pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19 503725 1. As if to make up for allowing Richard Ellmann to drop Stephen Vincent Benet's "American Names" (with its eloquent concluding request, "Bury my heart at Wounded Knee") from *The New Oxford Book of American Verse*, his publishers have re-issued at a bargain price this classic etymological gazetteer. Stewart covers some 12,000 of the approximately 3,500,000 place-names in the United States, preceding them with a fascinating essay on the taxonomy of naming. None is older than Florida ("flowered, flowery"), the first American place named by a European (the Spanish explorer Ponce de León, on April 2, 1513); none is more recent than Truth or Consequences, the new name adopted by the citizens of Hot Springs, New Mexico, on March 31, 1950, so that the radio quiz show of that title would be broadcast once a year from their remote township. E. T. City, Utah, however, has no show-business or uncertainly connection - like the majority of US names it derives from a person, in this case an early settler called E. T. Benson. The peculiar name of Peculiar, Missouri, was chosen because the local postmaster was told that he must choose a peculiar name - there can be no duplication within a state. Oddly, Stewart does not list Hailey, Idaho, where Ezra Pound was born, nor nearby Ketchum, where Ernest Hemingway died.

Science

KENDRICK FRAZIER (Editor). *Science Confronts the Paranormal*. 367pp. Prometheus Books, 700 East Amherst Street, Buffalo, NY 14215. \$15.95. 0 87975 314 5. A selection of thirty-eight feisty polemics from the *Skeptical Inquirer*, the provocative American magazine "devoted to the critical investigation of pseudo-science from a scientific viewpoint". The field of battle ranges from Koestlerian coincidence and the testing of "psychics" in laboratory experiments to Turin and Loch Ness, as well as spoon-bending, palm reading and UFOs. Contributors include Martin Gardner, Isaac Asimov and the redoubtable scourge of the psychics, the magician James "the Amazing" Randi. Of necessity, the essays are brief and the tone repetitively combative, but the essays are sustained on the whole by bracing good sense and there are many fine moments.

Reviews by: Andrew Graham-Dixon, Alun Hollinghurst, Christopher Hawtree, Sean Freuch, J.K.L. Walker, Anne Boston, and Philip French.

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